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Dear friends and members,

I am very pleased to say that IFOAM EU is closing 2012 with a major success: the Commission’s ITRE Committee approved the amendments proposed by the TP Organics research platform, coordinated by IFOAM EU, for the HORIZON 2020 research framework. This is a major step to obtaining funding for organics in the next EU framework programme running from 2014–2020.

2012 has also seen much debate on the CAP reform and the launch of the Commission review of the organic legal and regulatory framework. IFOAM EU’s staff, members and board are working tirelessly to make sure the organic movement is heard and engaged in both processes.

On the review of the Organic Regulation, IFOAM EU has been present at all Commission hearings and the recent advisory group of the Commission. We repeated our advice not to go for a total revision as the organic sector just witnessed a major revision from 2006 to 2012. Furthermore, we urged the Commission to update the European organic action plan from 2004 and to put organic farming in the context of the new 2014-2020 policy framework. Concerning CAP reform, IFOAM EU has joined forces with other environmental NGOs to advocate for a greener CAP that benefits organic farmers who contribute to the environment. It is also a success that DG Agri Commissioner, Dacian Cioloș, advocates defining organic farmers as green by default.

Internally, IFOAM EU is preparing for its 6th General Assembly to be held just before BioFach on 12 February in Nuremberg, Germany. An important decision about IFOAM EU’s operating structure will be made, based on discussions throughout 2012. Therefore all members should take part.

In 2013, IFOAM EU will celebrate its 10th anniversary. This key time in our history calls for both celebration. The European organic movement can really be proud of the advances it has made in this time: from lobby work on organic interests to finding consensus within the movement, it has been a productive period. I look forward to celebrating all these achievements together with you next November – details to follow in the New Year. Make the party bigger: tell us what you would like the movement to celebrate.

Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Marco Schlüter
POLITICAL HOTSPOT

**HORIZON 2020: TP ORGANICS AND IFOAM EU’S PROPOSED AMENDMENTS APPROVED IN ITRE COMMITTEE**


**The compromise amendments proposed by TP Organics and its partners have been approved!**

TP Organics lobbied together with other NGOs, who submitted a common set of amendments to make a place for organics and to strengthen civil society in the next framework programme. This is a very important achievement which raises the profile of TP Organics and IFOAM EU in the European Parliament and of organic research in Horizon 2020.

The next steps in the legislative procedure are the plenary vote of the European Parliament and the negotiations with the Member States. TP Organics will continue its lobby work to ensure that organic food and farming gets an important role in the European Research Area for the next 7 years.
1. **NEWS FROM IFOAM EU WORKING FIELDS**

1.1. **EU Organic Regulation 834/2007**

**CONTROLS AND IMPORTS ON THE TABLE AT THE 110TH STANDING COMMITTEE ON ORGANIC FARMING**

On 13–14 November, two new working documents bearing amendments intended to increase the efficiency of controls in EU and on imported products were discussed at the 110th Standing Committee on Organic Farming (SCOF). The new document on controls proposes amendments that could have an important impact on the control system.

Therefore, IFOAM EU Group has formally requested that the organic unit:

- Undertake a transparent process that involves the sector and that takes the results of the impact assessment into account
- Reconsider its move towards a product-driven approach. This is in contrast with the process-driven approach of organic food and farming: the principles and benefits of organic are visible in the process of food production and focusing on end products ignores this
- Refrain from duplicating regulatory requirements as existing regulation is sufficient in many areas. The application of existing regulation must be improved before considering the introduction of new regulations.

Developments concerning the current equivalency agreements with the US, Canada and Japan and the possible agreements with China and South Korea were also presented during the November SCOF meeting.

Taking the opportunity of their presence at the SCOF, an IFOAM EU delegation met Miles McEvoy, USDA-NOP Deputy Administrator, and Cheri Courtney, USDA-NOP Director of Accreditation and International Activities Division, to discuss concerns and room for improvement in the EU-US organic equivalency agreement.

A large delegation of IFOAM EU experts advocated for our positions on flexibility, environmental performance, and controls and imports.

Based on the materials presented by the Commission, we repeated our advice not to embark on a total revision of the regulation as it is basically good as it is and as a major revision was undertaken from 2006 to 2012.

Furthermore, we urged the Commission to update the old European organic action plan dating from 2004 and to put organic farming in the context of the new 2014–2020 policy framework. Lastly, we expressed the sector’s concerns over the Commission’s apparent move towards a product-driven approach.

**REGULATION REVIEW: ADVISORY GROUP ON ORGANIC FARMING**

In the context of the Impact Assessment for the Organic Regulation Review, an enlarged Advisory Group on Organic Farming (AGOF) meeting took place in Brussels on 10 December. Stakeholders from all over Europe and speakers at the three hearings held in September, October and November 2012 were present to give further input to the Commission.

The Commission presented the results of the three hearings and at the same time received and took note of many new points. Topics discussed were:

- Competitiveness of organic operators
- Improvement of efficiency in controls in the organic farming system
- Consumer perception
- GMO contamination
- Extending the scope of the regulation to mass catering, textile and cosmetics.

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- GMO contamination
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1.1. EU Organic Regulation 834/2007

“EU/NON-EU AGRICULTURE” AND THE EU ORGANIC LOGO

The application of origin labelling (“EU,” “non-EU,” “Country” or “EU/ non-EU”) which should be used on organic products together with the EU leaf logo has been controversial since it was proposed late in the game by the European Parliament. It was introduced without a detailed impact analysis and proper consultation with organic operators. The general concept of origin labelling is supported by the organic sector; however experience has shown that the “EU/non-EU” designations to be included next to the organic logo has some limitations. For examples, companies face additional cost as multiple versions of a package for a single product are required due to sourcing constraints. Additionally, the origin designation does not fulfil its role properly as there is little information given in cases where the designation is “EU/non-EU Agriculture”, and most processed products bear this designation.

The organic sector is intensively discussing how to improve the origin labelling of organic food, in the context of the debate on the review of organic regulation. IFOAM EU has recently published a position presenting initial proposals on the way forward.

ORGANIC CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS

Some organic companies and control bodies are developing an “organic critical control point” concept (organic CCPs) to fulfil the obligations set out by the organic regulation, based on the “hazard analysis and critical control points” concept.

They are developing tools to help organic companies improve the precautionary measures they take to reduce the risk of contamination by unauthorised products or substances and their cleaning measures employed in storage places and throughout an operator's production chain.

The development of the organic CCPs concept was discussed by experts at the integrity workshop during the recent IFOAM EU Processing Conference. This concept was also presented by EOCC as a relevant approach to be taken into consideration during the regulation review at the AGOF on 10 December.
1.2. Policy

COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY (CAP)

MAJOR THREAT TO EU RURAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING POST-2013

The future of EU rural development funding 2014-2020 remains under serious threat after talks collapsed at an extraordinary summit of EU heads of States and Governments on the 22 and 23 November. Current proposals would see pillar 2 (rural development) slashed by approximately 13% from 96.2bn to 83.7bn euro based on the current EU budget 2007 to 2013. Pillar 1 (direct payments) would also see cuts of around 9.7% from 307.8bn to 277.9bn euro.

In a press release building up to the EU summit IFOAM EU stressed the importance of having a strong rural development budget for mainstreaming sustainable outcomes including the expansion of organic food and farming systems which can help to ensure a real future for rural economies by providing healthy food, employment and environmental services.

Despite the collapse of talks the figures are expected to remain the basis of on-going negotiations. Stakeholders from across the political spectrum are continuing to strongly push their own priorities for the EU budget, including the CAP, with both their own national governments and other Member States.

Final budget allocations are expected to be defined at a second EU Summit in February or March 2013. Once this decision is made the agreement will have to be approved by the European Parliament.

FARMER SECTOR GROUP DISCUSSES POLICY PRIORITIES IN BRUSSELS

Representatives from IFOAM EU Group farming associations participated in the first meeting of the Farmer Interest Group (FSG) in Brussels on 14–15 November. The meeting focused on a number of policy priorities identified by the FSG interim steering committee including:

- CAP reform and the corresponding political process
- Implementation of new rural development programmes
- Upcoming review of the organic regulation
- Capacity building
- Sustainability

The farmer interest group was launched in Copenhagen in April 2012 to strengthen the voice of farmers within the IFOAM EU Group and increase their involvement in the policy process.

We’re looking for more participants and the group is open to all farming member organisations. For more information contact info[at]ifoam-eu.org
Commission officials set out plans for a new EU level framework known as the Common Strategic Framework (CSF) which will replace the Strategic Guidelines for rural development programming (RDP), at a seminar on “Successful Programming” for rural development stakeholders from across the EU on 6–7 December. The new Framework seeks to bring together the five EU structural funds1 for the next financial planning period (2014–2020), in order to align national and regional policy with the EU 2020 strategy and to improve coordination between the different funds.

**All member states required to draw up EU multi-fund “Partnership Contract”**

Under the CSF, Member States will be required to prepare a new EU multi-fund agreement known as a “partnership contract” in consultation with stakeholders, which set out and commit the Member States to meet the EU’s targets for 2020 as part of new operational programming for 2014–2020, including RDP. The Commission is now meeting with Member States to begin this process and has prepared individual position papers including recommendations regarding each country’s partnership contract. The position papers seek to start a rolling dialogue between the Commission and Member States. Partnership contracts should be submitted for approval by the fourth quarter of 2013 with new rural development programmes implemented in the second half of 2014.

**Stakeholders address problems and solutions in RDP working groups**

IFOAM EU has participated in working groups on Environment and Competitiveness under the Commission’s Advisory Group on Rural Development and the European Rural Development Network’s Focus Group on Environmental Services which attempt to bring together broad stakeholder perspectives on current programming to draw lessons for new rural development programmes.

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1 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), the European Social Fund (ESF), the Cohesion Fund (CF) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

**FUTURE PROMOTIONAL POLICY MUST RECOGNISE ORGANIC FARMING, SAY MEPs**

The increasing consumer demand for organic products and the need to stimulate the development of organic production through enhanced promotional measures must be recognised in EU promotion policy, according to a resolution on future promotion measures for agricultural products adopted by MEPs in plenary on 20 November. The resolution stems from a report tabled by MEPs of the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee in September in response to the Commission’s communication on the future of EU information provision and promotion activity.

In a press release IFOAM EU welcomed the resolution and stated that EU promotion policy is key to greater consumer awareness of the organic logo and the legally protected terms such as “organic”, “ecologic” and “biologique”. Many of the recommendations put forward, including multi-country campaigns and more flexibility for programmes to respond to fluctuating market conditions, as well support for local and regional markets were also welcomed.
GFGF CAMPAIGNERS TO TAKE PART IN INTERNATIONAL GREEN WEEK CAP DEMO

Join the Good Food Good Farming (GFGF) demonstration on 19 January 2013 during the International Green Week in Berlin (18–27 January 2013). The demonstration will come at a timely moment in the CAP political process, as Agricultural Ministers from all EU Member States meet in Berlin and the European Parliament’s Agriculture Committee will be voting on their CAP reports on 23–24 January. The alliance of farmer and civil society groups behind the demonstration are calling on European citizens to come together to show CAP decision makers that “We’ve had enough” and want “Good Food and Good Farming now!”

In another GFGF initiative, a limited number of special edition GFGF newspapers featuring all the photo messages collected to date has been released. Order yours by visiting.

Farmers and citizens across the EU can continue to send photos and statements telling their decision makers that they want a CAP that is truly about Good Food and Good Farming in Europe. For further information visit http://www.goodfoodgoodfarming.eu
FOOD

PUSHING FOR BETTER GOVERNANCE AT EFSA
IFOAM EU joined other social and environmental organizations to push for a radical change to the regulation governing European Food and Safety Agency (EFSA), in the lead up to an expected proposal from the European Commission to revise the founding EFSA regulation in early 2013.

The core demands of a joint letter issued by the group of NGOs on 12 November are: the prevention of conflict of interest, more independence and greater transparency.

EFSA is responsible for assessing the health and environmental impacts of GMOs, chemicals and pesticides from food and animal feed products in the European market, but the means by which it reaches opinions and conclusions are highly questionable. One example is the basis on which scientific evidence is included or excluded, and the impact industries ties have on this. For example, Dr. Suzy Renckens moved directly to Syngenta after leaving her job as the head of GMO panel at EFSA in 2007.

FEEDING THE PLANET SUSTAINABLY
The European Commission is preparing a Communication on sustainable food in 2013. In order to gather practical case studies and to discuss ideas, a hearing was held on 19–20 November in Brussels: “Feeding the planet sustainably: from foresight to better integrated policies.” IFOAM EU policy manager Antje Kölling stated that organic farming should play a major role in upcoming initiatives for sustainable food based on the historical, long-term efforts of the organic farming movements to set sustainability standards. Moreover, legal obstacles for local food processing and locally adapted plant varieties need to be overcome.

Two organic case studies, Märkisches Landbrot from Germany and the Copenhagen house of food from Denmark, were presented by Joachim Weckmann and Anya Hultberg, respectively. They gave fresh insight into how to achieve sustainability throughout the whole food chain, including organic farm practices and input and waste reduction in processing.

Awareness raising amongst consumers on the impact of food choices on the climate, environment and landscapes around cities was also presented.

On the other hand, the large scale food industry argued that standards should not be raised as doing so would hurt Europe’s international competitiveness.
ORGANIC FOOD IN CATERING AND PUBLIC CANTEENS – EU RULES?
Inclusion of organic catering in the scope of organic regulation was one of the topics discussed at the special AGOF meeting on the revision of Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 held 10 December. Stakeholders presented different approaches towards if and how organic catering should be regulated, and further debate can be expected on this topic.

Additionally, some AGOF participants highlighted that organic food should be provided in public canteens more often, and public procurement should be improved to promote placing more organic food in public canteens.

On a related note, at the meeting of European Food SCP Round Table earlier this month, Benjamin Caspar from DG Environment informed stakeholders that improvement of green public procurement rules for food will be discussed as part of the DG Environment debate on sustainable food. IFOAM EU Group will continue to take part in this debate and promote the organic movement approach.

For more information on green public procurement and best cases of the procurement of organic food in public canteens visit the IFOAM EU website.

ORGANIC PROCESSOR? TELL US YOUR EDUCATION NEEDS
Organic processing companies are invited to provide input on the gaps they see in employee competences and the educational needs of organic sector. Based on this input, the EduOFP project partners will develop a European concept for training for organic food processors.

Help define the concept by completing the survey, available in several languages at: http://www.ifoam-eu.org/workareas/projects/EduOFP/

Experts can also join the LinkedIn discussion on educational needs. Initial contributions will be discussed at the EduOFP project partners meeting in Fulda, Germany on 9-10 January 2013.

STEVIA SHOULD NOT BE TREATED AS A NOVEL FOOD
IFOAM EU calls for stevia to be allowed in food. This is already the case in Germany where, based on the ruling of the German courts, stevia can be used in products sold there. This judgement is based on the fact that products containing stevia were present on the German market before 1997 and thus should not be treated as a novel food. However, on the EU market stevia cannot be included in products as it is treated as a novel food. This diverging national and EU interpretation distorts the common market.

There is a need for consistent interpretation on the use of stevia and stevia extracts in the EU, as expressed in the letter sent by IFOAM EU to DG Sanco at the beginning of December (annexes).

EUROPEAN FOOD SCP ROUND TABLE
European Food Sustainable Consumption and Production Round Table published two reports in November. The publication of a report on the tool “ENVIFOOD Protocol Environmental Assessment of Food and Drink” launches public consultations, which are open until the end of March 2013. In parallel, voluntary pilot testing of the Draft ENVIFOOD Protocol will take place from 1 February to 31 August 2013. Companies can apply to test it until the end of January 2013.

The second report, Continuous Environmental Improvement, aims to provide common objectives for ensuring the environmentally sustainable production and consumption of food and drink products. This report illustrates and promotes continuous voluntary environmental sustainability initiatives that are or can be undertaken in the different stages of the food and drink value chain to address its key environmental challenges.
ENVIRONMENT & AGRICULTURE

SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AT DOHA AND THE CONFERENCE’S MITIGATED OUTCOME

Sustainable agriculture was discussed at various side events at the United Nations Conference on Climate Change in Doha, including a panel organised by IFOAM and the Indian National Council for Climate Change, Sustainable Development and Public Leadership on 6 December, which highlighted the potential of organic agriculture to sequester carbon, increase farm resilience to the effects of climate change and encourage rural livelihood. The IFOAM head office made use of the results and key conclusions of the ‘Cyprus Organic Days’.

The Doha Climate Change Conference came to an end with the Kyoto Protocol being extended until 2020. However, the 2013-2020 phase will not make a significant impact in terms of climate change mitigation at global level since the biggest industrialized, polluting countries such as the United States, Canada, Russia, Japan and New Zealand do not have any obligation to reduce their GHG emissions.

Nevertheless, the accounting rules on Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) agreed on last year in Durban will be implemented at European level, as the EU committed to implementing the Kyoto Protocol’s second phase (2013-2020). Moreover, the European Parliament will vote on its Environmental Committee’s final LULUCF report in plenary on 16 April 2013.

EU WATER BLUEPRINT CONFERENCE

The European Commission presented its ‘Blueprint to Safeguard Europe’s Water Resources’ to Member States and stakeholders at a Presidency in Cyprus on 26 November. Cypriot IFOAM EU board member Savvas Mouzakis attended the conference. In a statement from the floor, he highlighted the positive impacts of organic farming on water management through the prohibition of synthetic pesticides, the increase of water retention in soils through improved soil structure, and the reduction of nutrient leaching through crop rotation and lower livestock densities. After the conference he concluded: “The Communication of the Commission was highly welcomed by the conference participants. However, a lot of effort is still required to ensure healthy water resources at European level. This conference was a very good opportunity to exchange opinions with the EU Commission and other stakeholders, and a good occasion to underline the role played by the organic movement in protecting the environment at European level.”
The definition clarifies the specific features of organic biogas and facilitates communication with market partners.

The SUSTAINGAS partnership will continue to develop further criteria for the sustainability of organic biogas production and recommendations for organic biogas standards.

The ideal response to upcoming peak oil and peak phosphorus is organic agriculture with its emphasis on closing nutrient cycles according to Antje Kölling, IFOAM EU Policy Manager. She outlined policy demands to promote and stimulate sustainable innovation, for example through:

- A strong greening component under the CAP
- Rural development measures that prioritise organic farming
- Research and innovation policy that finally earmarks a significant part of the budget for the organic and low input farming practices.

Peter Melchett, Soil Association Policy Director, underlined the innovative potential of conventional breeding using markers and criticized the current support for GMO research. He also argued that consumers must be aware and involved for future food production and consumption to become sustainable.
AGRO-ECOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EU INSTITUTIONS

From best practise exchange to policy framework, the closing event of the project Agro-ecological Innovation, was held in Brussels on 15 November. It took place at the Belgian Information Office in front of the European Parliament and it was hosted by MEP Mr. Bart Staes from the Greens – European Free Alliance Party. Around 80 people representing farmer’s organizations, research institutes, NGOs, EU Institutions and other organizations from diverse EU countries attended.

This event was an opportunity for the project partners to present their recommendations for integrating agro-ecological innovation approaches into the EU’s new policy frameworks for research and innovation to policy makers and relevant stakeholders:

- Gradual improvement of environmental standards on farms should be made a precondition for the receipt of direct payments, in order to achieve real greening of rural development schemes and direct payments
- Horizon 2020 should dedicate 225–450 million euros to organic and low-input farming (5–10% of the proposed budget for agricultural research)
- The EIP Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability should prioritise exchanges of agro-ecological knowledge.

Innovative farming and food practices were also presented, such as:

- Agricultural systems that make full use of ecological services
- New forms of knowledge exchange
- Inspiring citizens to improve food culture.

Representatives from DG Research and Innovation and DG Agriculture and Development contributed to the debate on the integration of agro-ecology at EU policy level.

A promotional brochure containing ten examples of good innovative agro-ecological practices was distributed.

The agro-eco innovation project was a common initiative of IFOAM EU Group, ARC 2020 and TP Organics, and has been funded by Fondation de France and DG Environment.
TP ORGANICS PRESENT AT FIRST EXTERNAL ADVISORY BOARD OF ERA-NET SUSFOOD

On 29 November 29, TP Organics participated in the first External Advisory Board of ERA-Net SUSFOOD (the acronym for SUStainable FOOD production and consumption). This transnational cooperation for research funding, consists of a network of 25 partners from 16 European countries. As an ERA-Net, SUSFOOD aims to set up a European Strategic Research Agenda and it will issue two calls for research projects. Eight broad research topics have already been defined, covering the entire food value chain once produce has passed the farm gate. At the meeting of the advisory board, TP Organics underlined the importance of connecting consumers with the other actors in the food system.

Active involvement of consumers can empower them to adopt more sustainable food habits, whereas a lack of awareness, modern lifestyles and institutional arrangements tend to distance consumers from the food system. Therefore TP Organics asked SUSFOOD to fund research projects that support the establishment of locally adapted food systems and short food supply chains, which can remunerate producers for more environmentally sustainable production methods.

FACCE-JPI: NEW STRATEGIC RESEARCH AGENDA

On 5 December, the Joint Programming Initiative for Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change (FACCE-JPI) launched its Strategic Research Agenda, designed as a research and innovation road map and elaborated in dialogue with international scientists and other stakeholders, including TP Organics. It sets out 5 core research themes to be tackled by FACCE-JPI:

- Sustainable food security under climate change
- Environmentally sustainable growth and intensification of agriculture
- Trade-offs between food supply, biodiversity and ecosystem services
- Adaptation to climate change
- Mitigation of climate change.

The Strategic Agenda defines short, medium, and long term research priorities and joint actions for each of these core themes, in order to reinforce infrastructures and platforms, training and capacity building in Europe and knowledge exchange. It also foresees evaluation and monitoring of its activities.

By aligning national research programmes, FACCE-JPI aims to reduce duplication, cover gaps, and create synergies at European level. The implementation of the joint research priorities has already begun with the creation of the knowledge hub Modelling European Agriculture with Climate Change for Food Security (FACCE MACSUR). A second joint action, an international call on Greenhouse Gas Mitigation in collaboration with non EU-countries, is planned for early 2013.
2. SPONSORSHIP

SUPPORT IFOAM EU GROUP!
Next to membership fees, sponsoring is the only other financial input that can guarantee the carrying out of independent advocacy work and a proper presentation of the organic movement in Brussels.

To gain a wide number of sponsors, the IFOAM EU Group offers a variety of sponsorship options – there is at least one that will fit your needs!

The IFOAM EU Group will be pleased to jointly develop with you the best sponsoring option with you. Get in contact with us for the fine-tuning of your sponsor ideas:

Laura.Ullmann@ifoam-eu.org

Tel: +32 2 808 79 91

KEY SPONSOR PRESENTATION
IFOAM EU key sponsors 2012: ARIZA, CAAE and ICEA/FECD

ARIZA, CAAE and ICEA/FECD show their support for the work of IFOAM EU by a financial cooperation with IFOAM EU throughout the year 2012. Their money will be used to co-finance IFOAM EU events, projects and publications and is a highly valued contribution to our work.

IFOAM EU SPONSORSHIP IN ACTION!

Sponsorship awards at the 6th European Organic Congress

© John Portelli

5th European Organic Congress

© John Portelli

Processing Conference, 2011

© Andrzej Szeremeta

IFOAM EU Group will be pleased to jointly develop with you the best sponsoring option for you.

Get in contact with us for the fine-tuning of your sponsor ideas.

Contact
IFOAM EU Group
- a triple-win partnership:
For You, IFOAM EU and Organic Food and Farming!
3. EVENTS
3.1. Review of events

**HAPPY 40TH IFOAM!**
On November 26, 2012, IFOAM celebrated its 40th year of existence. The official reception was held in the IFOAM Head Office in Bonn, Germany, and over one hundred invited guests travelled from around the world to attend. Pioneers from IFOAM’s early years, through to the new millennium took the stage to congratulate IFOAM for 40 years of leading, uniting and assisting the organic movement. IFOAM EU is proud to have joined in on the festivities celebrating IFOAM’s 40 years of unifying, assisting and leading the organic movement.

**IFOAM SUSTAINABILITY CAMP**
Some eighty participants from 44 countries and a plethora of organic organisations – including IFOAM EU! – travelled to Bonn for the Sustainability Camp to exchange on sustainability in agriculture and the way forward for the organic sector. Participants work on refining a refined reference document for ‘Sustainability in Agriculture: Organic Best Practices,’ and formulated strategic recommendations for policy and decision-makers, as well as other key players. The messages collected throughout the event were translated into the **Bonn Sustainability Days Declaration**.
3.1 Review of events

RESULTS OF THE 2ND IFOAM EU CONFERENCE ON ORGANIC FOOD PROCESSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

“The organic processing rules in the EU Organic Regulation need to be adapted to the needs of a fast-growing and changing market. The relevant rules in Organic Regulation (EC) no 834/2007 should be adjusted to match the reality of the EU organic market.” Words well spoken by Alexander Beck from Aoel, summarise the results of the 2nd IFOAM EU Group Conference on organic food processing and environmental performance, “The Future of Organic Food Processing: Sustainability – Quality – Integrity,” held 26-27 November 2012 in Frankfurt, Germany.

More than 80 participants from 15 European countries attended and the presence of Mr. João Onofre, new Head of the Organic Farming Unit, DG Agri, and several members of Agricultural Ministries gave organic sector representatives the opportunity to exchange with policy makers on legislative approaches to organic food processing.

Participants also discussed various approaches in detail during workshops, leading to the following conclusions and recommendations:

- Organic production at farm and processor levels is already a sustainable practice, but sustainability can be increased by introducing a legislative requirement for basic environmental management systems at units that process organic food
- There is a need to increase the efficiency and harmonization of controls in the EU and Third Countries
- Rules and research on additives, flavourings, microorganism preparations and processing techniques are fundamental to increasing the general quality of organic foods.

Consult the workshop results, posters and conference proceedings.
LIMA, ‘T SCHOP AND BIONEXT HOST IFOAM EU

Philip Vanden Abeele from the Lima Quality Assurance department showed IFOAM EU staff the Lima lab and explained how Lima ensures both raw materials and final products meet organic standards. Lima’s efforts to lead on environmentally friendly packaging were also demonstrated.

‘t Schop is an organic farm with a special touch. Visitors can cook their own meals using products from the farm – a great way for IFOAM EU staff to get a health midday meal.

At Bionext, Marian Blom, Miriam van Bree, Pauline Veerman and Bavo van den Idsert welcomed us with an explanation of the organic sector in the Netherlands and Bionext’s sector groups, company services and innovative consumer campaigns.
### Calendar of events

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<td>19 January</td>
<td>The Good Food Good Farming Demonstration</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
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<td>18–27 January</td>
<td>International Green Week</td>
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<td>13–16 February</td>
<td>BioFach 2013</td>
<td>Nürnberg, Germany</td>
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This newsletter exists to inform IFOAM members about the work of the IFOAM EU Group and its liaison and coordination office in Brussels. The IFOAM EU Group is the European Regional Group of the worldwide umbrella organisation IFOAM and is responsible for all matters related to organic farming with a Europe-wide scope.

Information IFOAM EU Group: http://www.ifoam-eu.org

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