

## Press Release

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements – EU Regional Group

# CAP deal lacks strong and credible steps towards sustainability

**Brussels, 26/06/2013** – Today the Irish EU Presidency, European Parliament and Commission negotiators reached an agreement on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) 2014-2020. The IFOAM EU Group (1) strongly criticises the lack of ambition set out in the final settlement. While greening has been established as an idea, the deal does not provide the necessary shift towards greener and fairer farming and rural communities.

“The introduction of **Pillar 1** greening is just the first step to steer direct payments towards better practices – but the obligations are far too weak! While the recognition of organic farms as ‘green by definition’ is a good step to acknowledge their pioneering role in sustainability (3), the agreement also includes a questionable equivalence principle and exemptions for low-level agri-environmental practices which empty the greening of all substance,” said Christopher Stopes, IFOAM EU Group President. “The deal is also far from providing fairness amongst farmers, as convergence of CAP payments still remains insufficient.”

“We welcome that at least 30% of the **Pillar 2** budget will be allocated to measures that for the most part contribute to enhanced environmental performance, however this is not progress but a continuation of the status quo” added Jan Plagge, IFOAM EU Farmer Sector Group Chairman. “The few positive moves – such as increased investment support connected to organic farming and agri-environment-climate schemes, a clear message that new Innovation Partnerships must support a transition to agro-ecological approaches, and the introduction of an extra article governing support schemes for organic farming – can only have an impact if there is significant funding allocated to Pillar 2. The possibility for Member States to spend major parts of the budget for insurance schemes and other measures without any positive impact on sustainability further undermines the potential for Pillar 2 to promote the shift towards sustainable farming.”

“Good CAP **implementation at regional and national level** could partially salvage the attempt to green the CAP,” concluded Thomas Fertl, IFOAM EU Group Vice President. “Over the coming months organic farmers and citizens must push countries and regions to make the best use of the new and existing tools by:

- Implementing clear and strict greening requirements under Pillar 1 that do not hamper additional strong Pillar 2 pillar measures for advanced sustainability
- Using the option to shift up to 15% of national CAP budgets from Pillar 1 to Pillar 2 (modulation, article 14.1)
- Dedicating more than 50% of the Pillar 2 budget to measures that promote advanced sustainability (organic farming and agri-environment-climate)
- Prioritising agro-ecological approaches including organic farming across rural development programmes” (4).

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NOTES:

- (1) The **IFOAM EU Group** represents more than 160 member organizations in the EU-27, the EU accession countries and EFTA. Member organizations include consumer, farmer and processor associations; research, education and advisory organizations.
- (2) What Europeans think of agriculture and the CAP, Eurobarometer, 2011  
[ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs\\_368\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_368_en.pdf); European opinion on the use of public money in the agricultural sector, Factwise on behalf of WWF, February 2013,  
[awsassets.panda.org/downloads/european\\_opinion\\_on\\_the\\_use\\_of\\_public\\_money\\_in\\_the\\_agricultural\\_sector\\_final\\_with\\_tables\\_1.pdf](http://awsassets.panda.org/downloads/european_opinion_on_the_use_of_public_money_in_the_agricultural_sector_final_with_tables_1.pdf)
- (3) Organic Food and Farming: A system approach to meet the sustainability challenge, IFOAM EU Group, 2010  
[http://eu.ifoam.org/sites/default/files/page/files/ifoameu\\_policy\\_system\\_approach\\_dossier\\_2010.pdf](http://eu.ifoam.org/sites/default/files/page/files/ifoameu_policy_system_approach_dossier_2010.pdf)
- (4) Organic Approaches to Rural Development Policy Factsheets, IFOAM EU Group 2012  
<http://eu.ifoam.org/en/library/factsheets>