

EU leaders must guarantee a greener and fairer future for Europe's farming and rural areas

EU Council needs to underpin CAP reform with substantial Pillar 2 funding and strong Pillar 1 greening

Brussels, 06/02/2013 – On the eve of EU Budget negotiations the IFOAM EU Group (1) calls on EU Heads of State and Government to lay the foundations for a greener and fairer CAP. Proposed disproportionate cuts to the Pillar 2 budget (9.3% for Pillar 2 compared to 3.0% for Pillar 1) and any weakening of Pillar 1 greening under the next Multi-annual Financial Framework (MMF) 2014-2020 must be rejected (2).

"EU taxpayers will only accept a strong agriculture budget if it brings about a comprehensive greening of the entire CAP", points out Christopher Stopes, IFOAM EU Group President. "Untargeted Pillar 1 payments have for too long contributed to the intensification of agriculture and benefited large-scale farmers and agri-businesses to detriment of our environment and have impacted negatively on the rural economy (3). This reform must ensure at least 30% of Pillar 1 funding is dedicated to a strong greening package of effective agronomic measures. It must also guarantee that all farmers in receipt of public money undertake substantial public goods delivery that decisively shifts EU food and farming towards greater sustainability by 2020."

"To confront climate change, promote the good management of our natural resources and respond to the employment crisis in our rural areas, Europe needs a policy that has the tools to lift environmental performance and the long-term viability of our rural areas." adds Marco Schlüter, IFOAM EU Group Director, "Rural Development measures under Pillar 2 are the best vehicle to promote viable, sustainable rural economies and build on the greening of direct payments. In addition to substantial greening of Pillar 1, EU leaders must ensure robust Pillar 2 funding that prioritises agro-ecological approaches such as organic farming (4). Only this can put high quality food production, enhanced environmental delivery and sustainable job creation in rural areas at the heart of the next EU budget."

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Notes

- (1) The IFOAM EU Group represents more than 250 member organisations of IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) in the EU-27, the EU accession countries and EFTA. Member organisations include consumer, farmer and processor associations; research, education and advisory organisations; certification bodies and commercial organic companies.
- (2) Based on the current position of European Council President Herman van Rompuy vis-à-vis the European Commission's proposed budget figures.
- (3) IFOAM EU Group, 2011, The Truth Behind the CAP: 13 reasons for green reform http://www.ifoam-eu.org/workareas/policy/php/factsheets/CAP_Factsheets_en.pdf.
- (4) IFOAM EU Group. 2010. Organic Food and Farming: A system approach to meet the sustainability challenge, http://www.ifoam-eu.org/workareas/policy/pdf/IFOAMEU_dossier_organic_farming_system_approach.pdf. Find out more about the CAP reform and IFOAM EU's position via this website: <http://www.ifoam-eu.org/workareas/policy/php/CAP.php>