

Brussels, 5 September 2013

Mrs. Máire GEOGHEGAN-QUINN  
Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science  
Brussels - Belgium

Mr. CIOLOŞ  
Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development  
Brussels - Belgium

**Ensuring Inclusive and Successful Innovation in the European Agro-Food sector**

Dear Mrs. Geoghegan-Quinn  
Dear Mr. Cioloş

First of all, I would like to thank the Commission for recognising TP Organics as an official European technology platform. I am looking forward to a fruitful cooperation and a successful implementation of the Innovation Union, Horizon 2020 and the EIP for Agriculture. I would like to take this opportunity to communicate a concern expressed on our stakeholder forum of 25 June regarding the Commission's preference for large-scale projects in Horizon 2020. Our members ask the Commission as well to ensure consistency between Horizon 2020, the Rural Development Regulation and the EIP for Agriculture.

Our members, a wide array of EU sector umbrellas, SMEs, civil society organisations and scientific institutes, support the challenge based approach of Horizon 2020, but are concerned that small-scale projects only tackling one aspect of a challenge will be disfavoured. Although TP Organics is in principle not against large-scale projects, I would like to point out that a too strong focus on large-scale project would have a negative impact on innovation in the European food and farming sector. The European agricultural sector is characterised by a high diversity of farm types and sizes, food processing companies -among which many SMEs- and even agricultural research institutes. This is also recognised by the Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) of the EIP for Agriculture, adopted last July, that states that "this diversity of EU agriculture is a strength that will be the basis for innovation generation". It continues to say that "the diversity of approaches should be reflected in the diversity in project size." We therefore urge you to make a significant share of the Horizon 2020 budget available for small-scale projects and to ensure that larger projects do not only benefit big institutes and companies.

Secondly, TP Organics would like to stress the need for consistency between Horizon 2020, the Rural Development Regulation and the EIP for Agriculture. The draft Rural Development Regulation makes a clear reference to 'progressing towards agro-ecological production systems' in Article 61 establishing the EIP for Agriculture. This goal should be reflected in the implementation of Horizon 2020. Finally, Horizon 2020 should take account of the first steps taken in the implementation of the EIP for Agriculture. In this respect, TP Organics would like to propose to set the themes of the Horizon 2020 calls for Thematic Network in accordance with the themes of the six focus groups that will start this autumn. This approach will ensure the highest possible impact of both the focus groups and the thematic networks.

TP organics is fully committed to make Horizon 2020 and the EIP for Agriculture a success for the whole food & farming sector in Europe. I hope I have convinced you that a consistent policy giving innovation opportunities to all the actors is needed for that.

Yours sincerely



Marco Schlüter  
Head of Secretariat