

ORGAP NEWSLETTER

Fifth Issue - 14th April 2008

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I. INTRODUCTION

The ORGAP research project is an EU funded policy support project under the 6th Research Framework Programme of the European Union with the goal to give scientific support for the implementation of the European Organic Action Plan, launched in June 2004 by the European Commission. The ORGAP Project started in May 2005 and will finalise next 30th of April 2008.

The 5th Issue of the Newsletter of the ORGAP Project is devoted to the last progress made in the project and will give an update about the current situation of National and Organic Actions Plans in the European Union.

Three relevant events were happening from end of November 2007 until March 2008, all of them related to policies for organic agriculture, Organic Action Plans and to the ORGAP Project activities:

- a) the European Organic Congress organised in Brussels at the beginning of December 2007 by the IFOAM EU Group (ORGAP project partner);
- b) the ORGAP Project Consortium and Advisory Committee Meeting, also held in Brussels at the beginning of January 2008; and
- c) the Public Workshop Session at Biofach in Nueremberg the 21st of February 2008.

Additionally the ORGAP Project was invited to present the provisional results to the Advisory Group on Organic Farming from the European Commission on the 7th of February 2008. All this is reported in this 5th Issue of the ORGAP Newsletter.

II. ORGAP PROJECT ACTIVITIES, OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

2.1 ACTIVITIES

a) ORGAP Consortium Meeting, Brussels January 08

In this meeting were shown some presentations about the progress of the research activities. Hereafter we are summarizing some relevant but provisional outcomes:

Update of the EU Organic Regulation Revision process.

O. Schmid, FiBL (Switzerland)

A summary and update of the new EU Organic Regulation Revision process involving the ORGAP Project aims and outcomes, was made by the Project Coordinator to the Consortium members participating in the meeting. Main relevant milestones in this period were the approval of the Council Regulation EC 834/2007 on Organic farming (in June 2007), the EC working process on implementation rules (starting in September 2007), where the EC has provided to the stakeholders a non-paper asking for feedback; a meeting between the members of the EC Unit for organic farming and the IFOAM EU Group Board members (in December 2007), and the final presentation of the EC revised

implementation rules documents taking into account comments from stakeholders, to be sent to the SCOF (Standing Committee of Organic Farming), to make a first revision round. In March 2008 these documents were sent to the EC Interservice Consultation and a second revision round will be held by SCOF in April-May 2008. The final decision is envisaged for June 2008.

ORGAPET development and update (ORGAP Evaluation Toolbox).

Nic Lampkin, UWA (United Kingdom)

The update of the ORGAPET discussion points was commented. The key users of ORGAPET will be mainly specialists. A resource manual on development, implementation and evaluation of action plans will be made for the public.

Most of the recommendations from the last meeting and the WP3 report have been taken into account.

Good progress is now being made on the revision of ORGAPET to produce the final version 6 for publication. In the revised sections, we have tried to address all the comments received in workshops, partner and advisory committees.

ORGAPET was shown, also how to navigate in ORGAPET sections and documents. Information about the new Evalsed methodology (former MEANS), was given. The Evalsed is purely internet based. This is an advantage compared with MEANS, which is hard copy based (no link possible on the ORGAP website). There are no major inconsistencies between the ORGAP documents and the new Evalsed. Evalsed emphasises also the stakeholder involvement. Beneficiaries are included directly in the evaluation processes. There is less focus on the implementation of the policies in Evalsed. There is not much information in Evalsed on about how to evaluate stakeholder involvement. To access to Evalsed use the link:

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/evaluation/evalsed/index_en.htm (english)

EU-Organic Action Plan (EU-OAP): Areas of conflicts and synergies.

Johannes Milchelsen, USD (Denmark)

The feedback coming from the country workshops indicates that the involved stakeholders in the eight involved EU Member States (CZ, DE, DK, ES, IT, NL, SI, UK) see the EU-OAP as insufficient and often as unworkable. Furthermore there was almost no money foreseen for the implementation; EU member states would have been doing their national OAP also without the EU-OAP. Therefore the support for the implementation of the EU-OAP is often "half-hearted". Only Slovenia and Czech Republic were positive to the EU-OAP, but for different reasons. It was hard to find general patterns in the perspectives of the stakeholders in the involved EU member states: Implementation problems of the EU-OAP, strategies and processes are country specific. The conclusion in the report was that the level of conflicts with the EU-OAP is decisive how the OAP will be implemented on national level. When the EU-OAP is transposed in the national OAP, nothing will happen, unless national stakeholders do something and see it as a political opportunity for them.

Another observation was that when selecting participants among the stakeholders for assessing the EUOAP, it is desirable to select those who have

capabilities in the developments of action plans as well as must be able to move across domains, as Organic Action Plans by its nature are multi-targetted. Some conclusions of the outcome of the report on the focus group discussion were commented. One of the problem area of implementation was that the EU-OAP was too distant and more an enabling framework. Another problem seems to be that national stakeholders do not feel that their thoughts and contributions have been sufficiently reflected and taken up by the EU-OAP. Interesting is that in general in countries with no national action plan, the EU-OAP was perceived more positively.

Early assessment of (potential) implementation problems of EU-OAP.

Raffaella Zanolì, UPM (Italy)

The lack of stakeholder involvement is perceived by the stakeholders to be the most important problem in the implementation of the EU-OAP in the EU member states. But there is a high variability of the stakeholders' answers concerning this issue.

The most named indicator to identify the cause-effect relation for "lack of stakeholder involvement" is "Nature of stakeholders involvement in preparing and making policy decision". Sometimes stakeholders criticised this indicator. But when asking for other indicators, no feedback came from them. Sometimes there were inconsistencies in the answers of the stakeholders regarding indicators. In general terms, many people have problems to work with indicators, if they are not used to it. For example "we have problems with the implementation of the OAP", but stakeholders cannot identify the concrete problems they have and therefore cannot suggest more concrete indicators to measure their general problems with the implementation of the OAP

Initial assessment of the ORGAPET on the EU-OAP.

Raffaella Zanolì, UPM (Italy)

For an initial assessment of the ORGAPET on the EU-OAP it was important to define and select the appropriate key indicators of ORGAPET. After a discussion in the project consortium the following examples of indicators were considered, depending on the type of indicator group. The table 1 describes some possible indicators, which will be considered in the revision of ORGAPET for the final version 6.

Table 1 - Type of indicators

| Type | Description | Examples |
|------|--|--|
| A | Mainly qualitative, document related indicators, linked to checklists. | Describing the development process and the design of the action plan |
| B | Related to the resources available to the implementation of the OAP. | "Budget"; "Steering groups" and "staffing". "Steering group" is an indicator easy to measure An indicator may be relevant to some action points of the OAP, but not to others. |

Table 1 - Type of indicators (cont.)

| Type | Description | Examples |
|------|---|--|
| C | Indicators measuring direct output resulting from the OAP | 1a = N ^o of actions points completed. 1b = N ^o of actions points in progress 2 = Expenditure. 3 = Uptake of projects and businesses To be considered: Ratio between budget and expenditure |
| D | Indicators on results of the OAP (mainly the effects on the organic sector) | I = Production: New producers in conversion; Certified holdings; Prices; Business longevity; % of organic farm land compared to conventional farm land. II = Markets: Self sufficiency ratio; % market turnover from the organic production; Domestic consumption value as % of national production value. III = Regulation: confidence the consumers put in the regulation; No of differences in regulation; Other examples: number of infringements of organic products due to contamination with GMOs; EU or non EU product labelling; The impact of the new EU organic logo on the confidence of operators in the benefits of a common organic logo; Infringements per; Turnover of equivalent products (trade/equivalency). - IV = Capacity building: |
| E | Related to the relevant impacts for society of the policy makers' goals | I = Environment and resource sustainability |

Key indicator = indicator which will be recommended to the EC for use.

ORGAPET Practical Manual.

Victor Gonzalvez, IFOAM EU Group; Otto Schmid, FiBL (Switzerland)

A practical resource manual for the organic food and farming sector will be published in Mai 2008. The main content will be on: Organic Action Plans – what are they about. Planning and implementing Organic Action Plans. Evaluating Organic Action Plans. The objectives of the manual are to provide:

- a tool for stakeholder involvement in future action plan development and implementation processes at EU, national and regional level, and
- a guide to the use of the Organic Action Plan Evaluation Toolbox (ORGAPET) developed through the project.

ORGAP Dissemination of project results.

Victor Gonzalvez, IFOAM EU Group

The main activities will be two additional newsletters, two new topics on the ORGAP forum of the project website and several presentations and publications at conferences - in particular in Modena in June 2008 - and in other journals.

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(Großbritannien)

Synthesis of results and elaboration of policy recommendations.

Otto Schmid, FiBL (Switzerland)

The proposed outline for a synthesis report with policy recommendations was presented and discussed. It concluded that a text should be elaborated with

conclusions and recommendations in a fresh style and not just as executive summaries of the different reports. The new structure of the report, will integrate information, conclusions and recommendations in the following structure: a) Introduction; b) A brief history of Organic Action Plans in Europe; Organic Action Plans: what we know, what we don't know; c) What makes a successful Action Plan?; d) Stakeholder involvement; e) Coherence & consistency of Organic Action Plans. The EU OAP example; f) How to evaluate & monitor the implementation of OAP: the ORGAPET approach; g) Results & discussion (conclusions: what we have learned from ORGAP - beyond action plans); h) Policy recommendations.

b) ORGAP Session in Nueremberg at Biofach, 21st February 2008

The ORGAP Project has organised a public session at the Biofach Congress in Nueremberg the 21st of February 2008 , which was well attended (100 persons). The session name was "The European Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming - news and current status of implementation and policy analysis, including information about the ORGAP evaluation toolbox and its application". After an introductory presentation of the project made by O. Schmid (FiBL, Switzerland), the following presentations were made:

- The EU OAP - how is the state of implementation. M. Fladl, European Commission, DG AGRI, Unit F.5 - OF, EC
- Evaluation Toolbox (ORGAPET) and its application to the EUOAP. N. Lampkin, Aberystwyth University, UK
- Policy analysis of EU Action Plan implementation: R. Zanolli. Università Politecnica delle Marche, Ancona, Italy
- Future of policies for organic farming. S. Dabbert, University of Hohenheim, Germany
- Spain - Andalusia Organic Action Plan. V. González, IFOAM EU Group, Belgium
- France - Action plan: C.. Rogy, French Ministry of Agriculture, France

The EU OAP - how is the state of implementation.

Mrs. M. Fladl, European Commission, DG AGRI, Unit F.5 - OF, EC

Summary of the presentation:

Currently the EC is working on the revision of the legal framework:

- a) Implementing rules on production, labelling and control of imports, yeast, aquaculture and seaweed (expert groups), wine (research project ORWINE);
- b) promotion campaign; Statistics – Eurostat Group;
- c) new EU-logo;
- d) Research (Projects such as ORWINE, ORGAP, Certcost, etc);
- e) Setting up of an expert panel.

So far 19 actions of the European Organic Action Plan started and/or have been achieved as it can be seen in table 2.

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Table 2 - Progress in EU OAP

| Area of OAP | Main activities done or in Progress |
|--|--|
| Development of the market & consumer awareness | Promotion campaign, obligatory EU-logo; Database on private and public standards; Statistics on production and markets (Eurostat) |
| EU support policy | Additional aid for fruits and vegetables; Rural development (EC) No 1698/2005: food quality programme, investment aid, support of advisory services, education and training, support organic farming in sensitive areas, agro-environmental measures for conversion, maintaining organic farming, Leader-projects 94 RD-programmes (87 approved) |
| Improvement of legal framework-standards and control | Transparency, simplification; Enforcement of standards, adjustments and harmonization: new Council Regulation, new implementing rules; Extending the scope: aquaculture, seaweed, wine, yeast, etc.; Improvement of control concept (Reg. 882/04, OFFC); Rationalization of imports, third country rules: new rules on imports. |
| Accompanying measures | Set up of independent expert panel for technical support; Improvements of control bodies/authorities-accreditation; Annual reports-supervision; List of equivalent control bodies |

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▲ Source: Fladl, M (2008). European Organic Action Plan - state of play. Presentation at Biofach Congress 21th of February 2008.

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A table updating the progress of the 21 EU-OAP Actions is being worked out by the ORGAP Project team. The last version can be accessed at the webpage www.orgap.org.

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Policy analysis of EU Organic Action Plan implementation.

Raffaele Zanolli, UPM (Italy)

Summary of the presentation:

On the conflicts identified there was little agreement between the project partners participating in a specific policy analysis of the EU-OAP implementation. There was no agreement on the conflicting areas of the EU-OAP. Therefore it might be concluded that there are no large conflicts inside the EU-OAP itself, except for GMO or international trade. The measures of the EU-OAP are coherent. There are no areas of high synergies identified by the partners between the EU-OAP and the seven national OAP analysed. For example: The EU-OAP is facilitating the international trade of organic products as well as facilitating the import of products from third countries. But most of the national OAP's are doing the contrary.

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The European Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming - Do we need new approaches to organic farming policy?

Stephan Dabbert and Christian Eichert University of Hohenheim (Germany)

Summary of the presentation:

Starting hypothesis: Megatrends will shape future agricultural policies. The end of the global agricultural treadmill: the development of agricultural prices in the

20th century. Megatrends are: a) Climate change, both with respect to mitigation and adaptation; b) Demand for quality and high value foods will increase.

Technological progress in agriculture (and consequently growth in supply) was quicker than growth in (inelastic) demand. This led to:

- a) a tendency to depressed and highly fluctuating farm incomes;
- b) Negative environmental consequences;
- c) Agricultural policy as a remedy to these problems created new problems (e.g. trade conflicts, surplus production) and aggravated others;
- d) Organic farming policy as part of more general agricultural policies

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Factors beyond traditional agricultural policy are:

- a) Demand on world markets for agricultural products has been strongly increasing;
- b) Bio-energy as an emerging policy area;
- c) Slow down of technological progress in agriculture in some areas (?).

In agricultural policy:

- a) Some “side effects” of traditional income supporting policies are seen as unacceptable;
- b) Reform of 2003 & “Health check”; decoupling, agri-environmental policies;
- c) Viability of 1st pillar direct income supported in the medium to long run?.

What does this mean for organic farming policy?: Conceptually:

- a) Surplus reduction as a motive to support organic farming has vanished; More important become...
- b) Environmental aspects, especially contribution to climate change mitigation;
- c) Productivity and adaptive capacity in climate change, low productivity is a disadvantage.

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Important new questions towards organic farming:

- 1) How do organic farming systems perform with respect to their adaptive capacity to climate change?
- 2) Can economic instruments be developed that support organic farmers in dealing with market volatility?
- 3) How is the mitigation potential of organic farming if the lower productivity is fully taken into account?
- 4) Is there room to increase productivity of organic farming without jeopardizing its environmental advantages?
- 5) Are there possibilities to integrate some forms of bio-energy into organic farming?

If the assumptions on the megatrends are correct...

- It will become more difficult to continue and enhance the traditional per hectare organic support policies;
- There is a new set of justifications for policy intervention, the organic sector needs new arguments;
- Proven effects with respect to climate change mitigation and adaptation are more important arguments than in the past;
- Productivity is becoming more important, RTD for increasing productivity of organic farming is even more important than in the past;

- Quality assurance will stay high on the agenda for organic farming. Progress in information technology opens up new paths for quality assurance and efficient and reliable certification systems. This needs more exploration.

EU Organic Action Plan assessments.

Nic Lampkin, UWA (Germany)

Summary of the presentation:

Trend for the development of organic farming based on most indicators since 2004 is positive. But can this be attributed to the EU Organic Action Plan? As the EU-OAP is still in the implementation phase, most effects may still be to come. Other causal factors are: a) Economic/market conditions; b) National policy initiatives; c) Counterfactual what would have happened without the policy?. More info at www.orgap.org

France: Organic Farming to the 2012 Horizon.

Mrs. Catherine Rogy, Ministry of Agriculture (France)

Summary of the presentation:

A plan announced has been by Michel Barnier. The “Grenelle” Environment. The objectives in the organic farming area of the plan: a) to reach gradually by 2012 a target of 20% of organic products in mass catering, beginning with public-sector; b) to reach 6% of UAA for organic farming by 2012 with a further target of 20% for 2020. A plan with four main focus areas: a) Support for the structuring of sector supply chains; b) Mass catering; c) Appropriate regulations; d) Assistance for the conversion and long-term viability of holdings.

Table 3 - French Organic Action Plan

| Focus areas | Aims and actions |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Research, development and training | Create a scientific committee for organic farming. Create and fund an “Organic Farming” Network including all research centres, development institutes and agricultural schools. Improve public financial support for OF research and development projects (Special Access for OF to tender procedures for partnership projects in 2008 funded by the MAF). Organisation in May 2008 of an “organic farming research conference”. Ensuring a satisfactory level of French participation in the EU ERA-net “CORE Organic” project. Inclusion of the organic mode of production in official agricultural training manuals. Improve communication on the agricultural training offering. Implementation of a partnership with the French national education system. |

Table 3 - French Organic Action Plan (cont.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Support for the structuring of sector supply chains | Creation of a fund for the structuring of sector supply chains. Priority access for the O AFI to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries strategic fund for the agricultural and agri-food industries. State funds designed to assist regional programmes. Optimisation of the public support of OF projects at local level. The Fund for the structuring of sector supply chains include: a) Programmes with a structural focus at national level; b) € 3 million a year/ 5 years; c) Managed by the Agence BIO; d) Access through call for tender. |
| Mass catering | To increase the place of OP gradually in a) State mass catering and public canteens and b) School canteens. Also defining national rules applicable to mass catering with all the professionals. |
| Appropriate regulations | Ensuring that the organic mode of production is represented on the consultative bodies on which the state relies in defining its policies. To take better account the special characteristics of organic farming in the veterinary and plant protection domains. |
| Assistance for the conversion and long-term viability of holdings | Renewal and upward revision of the tax credit. Encourage holdings to remain organic when ownership changes. Ensuring account is taken of organic farming development goals in the context of the CAP Health Check Review. |

Source: Rogy, C.. (2008) Presentation at Biofach Congress. (Ministry of Agriculture of France)

Andalusian Organic Action Plan.

Victor González, IFOAM EU Group

Summary of the presentaiton.

Andalusia - a big spanish region - has finalised its first Organic Action Plan (2002-2006). Main aims were to address the most **urgent needs** of the Andalusian organic sector. The total investment was 93.8 M€. No quantitative goals (agreed with stakeholder). Some data and indicators of the results of the Andalusian Organic Action Plan (2002-2006) showing its succes were presented.

Table 5 - Main results and impact indicators of the Andalusian OAP

| Indicators | +/- % | indicators | +/- % |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| % of the total agricultural area | + 3,8 | Nº of organic industries | + 49 |
| Organic certified areas | + 60 | Nº of organic farmers | + 50 |
| Increase of organic animals | + 300 | Organic forest wild area surface (*) | - 80 |
| Organic pastures & forages surface | - 48 | Organic crops surface | + 27 |
| Vegetables surface | + 19 | Citriculture surface | + 27 |

Source: González, V. (2008) Presentation at Biofach Congress in Nueremberg

After this success, a second OAP has been developed consulting stakeholders and was recently approved for the period 2007-2013. Public investment planned is 326 M€ (3x) with a private investment of 58 M € (Total 384M €). The plan has no quantitative targets.

Also some non-quantified actions are foreseen. The new actions of the second Organic Action Plan (2007-2012) main axis are: a) Supporting Organic Production/Organic farmers; b) Supporting Organic processing; c) Developing internal organic foods consumption; d) Enhancing training, research and technology transfer in organic farming; e) Guarantying protection and transparency in the organic production (standards and certification); f) Stimulating women's participation in the organic sector; g) Developing sectors and territorial strategic plans to extend organic farming.

c) Meeting of the Advisory Group on Organic Farming in February 2008. V. González, IFOAM EU Group.

The IFOAM EU Group as ORGAP partner and member of this group was invited to present some provisional result of the project on 7th of February 2008 in Brussels. The presentation was focussed on final reports of the project. The presentation can be download from the CIRCA webpage and from the IFOAM EU Group webpage.

2.2 PROJECT, OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

Two reports of the ORGAP Project were finalised. We are presenting here only the executive summary of these reports. Public reports of the project can be downloaded at the webpage www.orgap.org .

Implementing the European OAP in EU Member States. Stakeholders' perceptions of implementation problems and coping strategies (D7).

The objective of this report is to develop knowledge on aspects of implementing organic action plans to be used as the basis of assessing implementation problems in an evaluation tool box on the European Organic Action Plan (EUOAP) of December 2004. The main result is a catalogue of implementation problems and coping strategies.

The theoretical background for the study is implementation research and its focus on conflicts between various actors as the main explanation for implementation success or failure. Conflicts are expected to influence implementation success through stakeholders' willingness, capability and comprehension in relation to the policy to be implemented. Conflicts are expected in both policy formulation and implementation processes involving actors at various levels ranging from policy makers to target groups. The main conflict with regard to organic food and farming is the conflict between the organic sector and the non-organic sector. Successful implementation is then supposed to relate to a low level of conflict - for instance brought about by coalitions. One type of conflict is conflict over policy goals, which is a main part of political dynamics. Hence, clear and unambiguous goals are seldom in

politics, and this is certainly the case of the European Organic Action Plan with its two overarching drivers of concern for the consumers/the market and for public goods such as the environment.

The EUOAP includes recommendations only – and the realisation of recommendations is still in its initial phase. Implementation is thus a rather hypothetical issue and can only be assessed in qualitative terms. Therefore the methodology used for this study is focus group discussions in the eight EU member states with an organic action plan: the Czech Republic (CZ), Germany (DE), Denmark (DK), England (EN), Spain (ES), Italy (IT), the Netherlands (NL) and Slovenia (SI). The selection of member states implies that participants in focus groups had some knowledge on the problems associated with implementing organic action plans, but that they on the other hand should have a systematically more positive attitude to the implementation of the EUOAP than expected in all EU member states. The focus group discussions were to produce data on central stakeholders' willingness, capability and comprehension with regard to the implementation of the EUOAP in member states.

All focus groups discussed implementation problems and coping strategies in relation to the EU Commission's proposal for a new regulation on organic production. It is an output of the EUOAP and it is expected to be implemented by all member states by 2009. Two focus groups discussed implementation problems and coping strategies in relation to the recommendations on using the Rural Development Plans as basis for financing the national implementation of the EUOAP. This is also a rather concrete discussion topic since all member states had to specify the distribution of subsidies for Rural Development Plans for 2007 and following years about the time when the focus groups were held (November 2006 to February 2007). The second discussion topic in six focus groups was the recommendations on a more transparent market development included in the EUOAP, which partly overlapped the new regulation and partly included many specific recommendations on ways to obtain market transparency. When the results of the discussions of the three topics were combined, it appeared that findings were complementary and that they seem representative for discussions of the full EUOAP and of national organic action plans.

With regard to willingness, the focus groups formed a scale ranging from positive to negative in terms of expectations to the EUOAP and importance associated with it. The CZ and SI focus groups were positive in both respects while the DK focus group had positive expectation but found the EUOAP insignificant, the DE, EN and IT focus groups were neutral in expectations but found the EUOAP insufficient, and the ES focus group was negative regarding expectation and found the EUOAP insufficient. Across the eight member states with highest ambitions regarding organic action plans, we thus only found half hearted back up of the European Organic Action Plan.

Regarding capability, the focus groups ranged from being predominantly policy oriented (EN and NL) to being predominantly target group oriented (IT and SI) although the main group of participants across the eight focus groups belonged to the stakeholder type that combined interests in political and practical issues. It was common to all focus groups that no participant had a purely non-organic background and only few that gave preference to non-organic activities. This composition of focus groups implies that findings do not reflect interaction between organic farming and the general food and farming sector.

Stakeholder comprehension was transformed from the transcriptions of the eight focus group discussions into the catalogue of implementation problems and coping strategies through a systematic condensation of stakeholder statements. In Chapter three, the various types of statements made within the very specific context of a national focus group were condensed into subtopics on implementation problems and coping strategies specific for each focus group. Only few and unsystematic conflicts appeared within the focus groups and therefore the unit of analysis was each focus group rather than each participant. In Chapter four, the subtopics were decontextualised in two ways. First, the subtopics mentioned in all focus groups were compared. The comparison showed that only few and rather specific subtopics were covered in all focus groups, and that only little clear opposition between focus groups appeared since variation between focus groups rather was a matter of different national perspectives. It was thus relevant to make a combined list of implementation problems and coping strategies. This was done in two steps. The first step was to cluster all subtopics mentioned under each main topic according to theme and irrespective of focus group. The second step was to rearrange the thematic clusters of subtopics in accordance with a model that integrates and summarises implementation research. From the second step it appeared that the clusters of subtopics covered all four main aspects of the implementation model and that the combined findings thereby served the purpose of illustrating all main aspects of barriers to successful implementation.

In Chapter five, the catalogue of implementation problems and coping strategies is presented within the framework of the implementation model. Regarding the socio-economic context of implementing the EUOAP, the three clusters of problems mentioned included the perception of organic farming, the context of market development, and more specific contextual issues. Problems relating to policy formulation and policy design were covered by four clusters on procedural issues, the general view on market institutionalisation, issues of political aims and scope (including funding), and the content of the EUOAP. Seven clusters were about problems in the implementation process, four of them were about organisational and inter organisational behaviour and included clusters on structural issues, general administrative issues, specific issues on content, and funding issues; three additional clusters covered interaction with target group and included market development, content of the EUOAP to which was added interaction with agri-business, food businesses and with consumers although this was not mentioned in any focus group. Finally, problems relating

to implementation results were covered by two clusters: one on impact issues, focusing on unintended results, and one on intended implementation results although they were not mentioned in any focus group. The main purpose of the catalogue is to typify all main problems and coping strategies that may be expected in EU member states implementing the EUOAP or other organic action plans. Evaluations of the EUOAP or other organic action plans should therefore take a stand on dealing with all these types of problems.

Stakeholders' comprehension may also be summarised in a more pragmatic way. The main impression from the comparative analysis is the lack of common understandings across focus groups since subtopics varied much and the views expressed were very specific to the national context. Only few subtopics were common to more than a few focus groups, and even the views on these subtopics varied much between focus groups – except regarding the subtopics claiming a very low GMO threshold in the new regulation and the lack of relevant statistical data as basis for market transparency. The clustering of subtopics revealed that beyond the scattered subtopics of relatively simple problems found in all implementation studies, it was possible to identify several expressions of a rather sceptical approach to the ideas behind the EUOAP. A few but rather fundamental implementation problems appeared from this analysis concerning the perceptions of a socio-economic context negative to organic food and farming, a negative attitude towards the idea of market transparency, and a focus on unintended implementation results with potentially major negative impacts on organic food and farming rather than on problems related to reaching intended implementation results. Although the focus groups were to discuss implementation problems these subtopics seem to reflect negative comprehension at a rather fundamental level.

In sum, the contributions to successful implementation of the EUOAP from willingness, capability and comprehension all seem rather ambiguous. The focus groups' expressed willingness to implement the EUOAP is half hearted even in the member states with existing organic action plans and thus characterised by an attitudinal match. Capability is also ambiguous as measured in the way done here. The focus groups are composed of the main stakeholders of the organic food and farming sector representing a broad coverage of the policy, intermediate and target levels of the implementation process, and thereby those most capable of implementing policies in support of organic food and farming. A negative account on capability is the non-participation of representatives of non-organic actors of the food and farming sector and the very low participation of actors representing predominantly non-organic activities. This is important since growth of organic food and farming is taking place within the framework of the predominantly non-organic food market. Finally, even comprehension is ambiguous. On the one hand the focus groups comprehend the implementation problems and coping strategies in relatively pragmatic terms about solving specific problems regarding the three main topics discussed. On the other hand, the analysis revealed the presence of a deep scepticism about the market orientated basis of the EUOAP.

The main conclusion from the analysis done here is thus that successful implementation in any member state is a matter of balances between positive and negative aspects of all three main dimensions of implementation: willingness, capability and comprehension. These balances are unique to each member state and within each dimension. The main expectation is that more weight on positive aspects on all three dimensions will lead to more successful implementation, while there are no clear expectations with regard to the interplay between the balances of the three dimensions.

The study reported here is characterised by a theoretically unexpected lack of conflict within each focus group. In Chapter three it appeared that only few statements were opposed and that a broad consensus appeared in spite of all attempts to allow expressions of conflict through group facilitation. In Chapter four it even appeared that although focus groups varied from positive to negative on the willingness scale only few disagreements – not to say conflicts – over the comprehension of the EUOAP appeared when comparing the outcomes of their discussions. Conflict was thus not an issue in the direct data analysis. However, the theoretically informed, final analysis showed the major importance of the conflict between the organic food and farming sector on the one hand and various threats against it from the socio-economic context, from the ideas behind the EUOAP and from the focus on its unintended impacts. This demonstrates that a certain level of conflict is involved in the organic sector's comprehension of the socio-economic context that includes the mainstream and non-organic part of the food sector and agricultural policy. Full report can be download at the Project website: www.orgap.org

Public synthesis report on the scope of national action plans, their evaluation procedures and the operability and appropriateness of the developed evaluation concept at national level, as well as the impact of conflict/synergies and policy proposals for implementing the EU Action Plan in member states (D8) (Summary)

This final report comprises all official documents prepared within work package 3 (“National Action Plan analysis”) of the ORGAP project. It comprises different views on the topic *evaluation of organic action plans*.

The first official document “Documentation about national Action Plans for Organic Food and Farming” describes in form of a desk-top study the current status quo of national action plans in Europe. The main aim of this report is to provide a structured documentation about the objectives, development processes and measures of eight national and regional Action Plans for Organic Food and Farming (Czech Republic, Andalusia (Spain), England, Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany, Slovenia and Italy). Furthermore this report tries to facilitate the access to detailed action plan information and to provide a condensed comparison of the action plans documented. The report can be seen

as ORGAP's *state-of-the-art* survey or as *analytical step* concerning organic action plans.

The second document "ORGAP WP3, task 3.2, final version" gives an insight into already conducted evaluation studies in the field of organic action plans in Europe via three meta-evaluations. The *task 3.2 report* contributes to a methodological learning process, helps to optimize the ORGAPET toolbox and provides information on the content level about the success and failure of Organic Action plans in general. This task can be seen as ORGAP's *keen insight* into action plan evaluations or as its *Meta step*.

The report "Comparative Documentation and Synthesis of ORGAPET testing" registers all comments on the ORGAPET toolbox collected via a comprehensive testing process in all ORGAP member states. Most remarks and recommendations from the involved stakeholders and evaluation experts fed directly into the ORGAPET toolbox. The key purpose of this task is to get some feedback on ORGAPET under the different needs and circumstances in the different countries involved. The results served towards an improvement of ORGAPET and were an opportunity to involve stakeholders further in the development of the projects evaluation methodology. This task constitutes ORGAP's *expert view* or *professional approach step* on organic action plans.

The last document "Implementing the European Organic Action Plan in EU member states - stakeholders' perceptions of implementation problems and coping strategies" recapitulates the results of a series of national workshops undertaken in winter/spring 2007. Task 3.4 brings together very different views and perceptions on organic action plans and possible evaluation methodologies and can be seen as ORGAP's *stakeholder oriented* or *public oriented step*.

The main intention and objective of all listed reports is to serve to the permanent and continuous updating and amelioration process of the ORGAPET evaluation toolbox. When comparing the shape of ORGAPET in autumn 2005 (start of WP3, first version of the ORGAPET toolbox) and in July 2007 (newest version of ORGAPET), it becomes obvious which impact WP3 has had on the look, structure and operability of ORGAPET. As a result of the ORGAPET testing process also a lot of recommendations concerning the usability of the toolbox could be integrated into its current version.

III. ORGANIC ACTION PLANS NEWS FROM AROUND EUROPE

National Organic Action Plans update

The IFOAM EU Group, in close cooperation with the ORGAP Consortium Partners, is currently searching and collecting information about National Organic Action Plans in the different EU Members States. In the next table below some provisional results are summarised. Final results will be collected and presented in the next ORGAP Newsletter issue.

**Table 4 - National organic Action Plans information in the European Union
January 2008**

| Country or region | Description |
|--------------------------|---|
| Andalusia (Spain) | First Regional OAP developed during the last 4 years (2002-2006), with a budget of 33,6 millions of € About 65% was devoted to support production conversion, 9% was for Research, 8,6 % for improving processing of organic produce, 6% to support organic consumption. The rest (7,4 %) was for different measures supporting in training education system, organic certification and organic sector better coordination. The plan has supported 45 projects 2.8 millions €. In this region the first General Directorate was established. The Andalusian regional government is now finalising the second Organic Action Plan (2007-2013). http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/agriculturaypesca/portal/opencms/portal/navegacion.jsp?entrada=tematica&tematica=650 |
| Asturias (Spain) | First Regional Organic Action Plan (2007-2009) investing 14,7 millions of €. |
| Austria | In Austrian the organic food and farming sector is currently negotiating the next Organic Action Plan with the Agriculture Ministry. It should be presented by Mid of April 2008. The old OAP can be downloaded at the webpage: http://land.lebensministerium.at/article/articleview/16396/1/4955/ |
| Basque country (Spain) | Approved this year a regional law with several measures to promote organic farming and to achieve 20 % of organic farming surface in 2020. |
| Belgium | The Flanders Regional Agriculture Government has started a participatory process involving the organic sector, that will result in a new Organic Action Plan. This Organic Action Plan for 2009-2012 will be presented by the Belgian Minister of agriculture during the "bio-week" 2008 (first week of June). More info: L. Laenens E-mail: leen.laenens@bioforum.be |
| Bulgaria | Below you can find the link to the Bulgarian Action plan currently being implemented. The Plan started beginning of 2008. More info: Svetla Nikolova. E-mail: svetla.nikolova@agrolink.org http://www.mzgar.government.bg/MZ_eng/RuralAreas/NOFAP_FINAL_en.pdf |
| Denmark | The Danish Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries has asked DARCOF (the Organic Research Platform) to lead a work that synthesizes the knowledge on the future possibilities for development of a market-based growth in the Danish production, manufacturing and turnover of organic products. The background for the work is the challenges posed by the recent growth in the organic sector both nationally and internationally. Among other issues, the work will focus on the importance of maintaining the organic quality and consumer trust. The work is centred around the assessment of four scenarios including an extrapolation of existing trends into a redoubling of the Danish organic food market in 2015, two scenarios of a quadrupled market (based on either domestic production or on imports), and a scenario of collapse of the Danish organic food market. A synthesis report is scheduled for ultimo 2008. More info, contact DARCOF directly - see www.darcof.dk |
| England (United Kingdom) | The first English Action Plan for organic farming was published in 2002 The English target (70% of UK market for indigenous foods supplied by domestic producers by 2010) is very much market focused, taking account of the high reliance of the UK organic food market on imports. More info: http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/organic/policy/actionplan/index.htm With most of the original action points delivered, and a review of progress published in 2004, the current focus is on integrating future work with the English Sustainable Food and Farming Strategy. See: http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/policy/sustain/index.htm . |
| Extremadura (Spain) | First Organic Action Plan approved by the Regional Parliament in 2008 |

Table 4 - National organic Action Plans information in the European Union
January 2008 (cont.)

| | |
|----------------|---|
| France | <p>The current French Organic Action Plan, called "Le Plan Barnier" after the name of the Agriculture Minister, who is officially its author. The document is annotated by FNAB. More info: O. Climent - FNAB E-mail: oclement@fnab.org</p> |
| Italy | <p>The Italian Organic Action Plan is very general and has been approved the 15th December 2005. At the same time the specific programme for the implementation of the Action Plan has been approved for the year 2005 which includes 4 strategic objectives. The Italian Action Plan has been structured in 4 axis:</p> <p>Axis 1: Penetrate international markets. Axis 2: Reinforcement and qualification of supply chain and trade organisation. Axis 3: Increase the domestic demand for organic products and public communication. Axis 4: Reinforcement and improvement of Public system and farms services.</p> <p>Law no. 311 of the 30th December 2004 had foreseen a specific public expenditure item to effect the Italian Action Plan for year 2005 (money allocated: 5 Million €). In theory, money allocated in the Fund for the development of organic farming and agricultural quality, instituted by the law of the 23rd December 1999 (financial law 2000), and the 5 Million € allocated by the financial law 2005 should be "ready" to be spent.</p> <p>The latest action is about marketing and supply chain management and was issued on November 12th 2007 with funding of € 1.100.000. Minister of Agriculture, Paolo De Castro, explained that through this tool the Ministry has the aim to meet the demand of non-processed organic products, to improve the integration of supply chain actors and to contribute to the organic market organisation costs.</p> <p>In addition, the initiatives taken into consideration concern actions for the organisational improvement in relation to the organic system dimension and to improve quality of organic product. In July 2007 a new framework regulation for R&D in the field of organic farming has been issued by the Minister of Agriculture, but it was published only at the end of 2007. This call is not related to the organic Action Plan, which does not concern research. Next project call will run from June to September 2008. More info: D. Vairo. daniela@agrecon.univpm.it</p> |
| Madrid (Spain) | <p>Launched a regional organic action Plan (2005-2007) investing 3 millions €. Castilla-La Mancha has also launched an Organic Action Plan (2007-2011) investing 44 millions of €. See www.castillalamancha.es/clmagro/pb/eventos2/eventos.asp?REG=687&AREA=servicios&pagina=detalle</p> |
| Nether-lands | <p>The Dutch Ministry will spend 49.2 million € in the years from 2008-2011 on organic. With that money they intend to realise two ambitions: 1) A better cooperation between organic agriculture and conventional farmers that are in the frontline of sustainability. Specific goals are: a)-research for organic is partly focused on issues that are important in conventional agriculture; b) 15 joint initiatives in society that connect organic and conventional agriculture; c) 10 innovations from the organic sector are being applied in conventional farming.</p> <p>2) Develop the organic sector into a robust independent sector. Specific goals are: a) annual 10% growth in consumer spending on organic food; b) annual 5% growth in organic land; c) 10% of all research money funded by the Ministry of Agriculture for policy supporting research will be allocated to organic.</p> <p>Next to that the ministry signed a declaration together with large commercial companies (caterers, supermarkets etc) and with a range of non-profit organisations that they would do their best to promote organic products in their businesses or amongst their members. http://www.minlnv.nl/cdlpub/servlet/CDLServlet?p_file_id=24885</p> <p>More info of the new policy document from the Dutch ministry of Agriculture for organic production in 2008 - 2011. http://www.minlnv.nl/cdlpub/servlet/CDLServlet?p_file_id=23687. More info: M. Blom E-mail: Blom@biologica.nl.</p> <p>Other links: Press release, announcing the new Dutch Organic Action Plan (in Dutch) http://www.minlnv.nl/portal/page?_pageid=116,1640333&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&p_news_item_id=22939 . New OAP (in Dutch): http://www.minlnv.nl/portal/page?_pageid=116,1640321&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&p_file_id=23687</p> |

Table 4 - National organic Action Plans information in the European Union
January 2008 (cont.)

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| North Ireland (United Kingdom) | Published in May 2006. This followed an earlier Organic Farming in Northern Ireland Development Strategy published in 2001. More info: http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/fisheries-farming-and-food/organic-crops/organic-action-plan-group.htm |
| Scotland (United Kingdom) | The first Scottish action plan was published in 2003. The third annual report has recently been published and documents achievements with respect to financial and advisory support for organic farming, marketing and research. Organic support payments have been increased, although access is not universal with a point system used to determine eligibility. More info: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Agriculture/Agricultural-Policy/15869/3748) |
| Spain | National Organic Action Plan with a global aim to establish the baseline for the policy Action of the MAPA in organic Farming during the next (2007-2010) and to facilitate a consensus with the regional authorities and the most representative sector organizations. The final purpose of the Action Plan is to contribute to develop the organic sector in Spain applying a set of specific actions in all the organic production, processing, marketing and distribution and consumption chains and also in education and research areas. More specific aims of the National Organic Plan are focussing on 3 strategic objectives: Objective 1. To promote the development of organic farming, in particular the primary sector, with education, Research, inputs regulation, rural development tools use and recognition of organic farming specificities. Objective 2. To improve the knowledge and to promote the consumption and marketing of organic products, as it's the most relevant challenge in Spain, mainly stimulating the internal demand thought and adequate information for consumers, accompanied of the improvement of marketing structures of the products. Objective 3. To improve institutional collaboration, management of resources for the organic sector, contributing to a better coordination, improving communication and the collaboration between all private and public sector agents involved in organic sector. For more information see: http://www.mapa.es/es/alimentacion/pags/ecologica/plan_integral.htm |
| Wales (United Kingdom) | The First Organic Action Plan was published in 1999. Currently implementing the 2sd Organic Plan 2005-2010 (see http://www.organic.aber.ac.uk/policy). With stronger emphasis on market development and consumer promotion, but also actions to support research and extension for producers and financial support for organic horticulture. The Wales OAP has a target of 10-15% in 2010. |

Source: IFOAM EU and ORGAP Consortium members

National Organic Action Plan Experiences

Examples of actions and evaluation of actions regarding research in the two Danish Action Plans for Organic Farming.

Johannes Michelsen, USD (Denmark)

To understand the mechanisms, the Danish AP's are recommendations to the ministry. They point at possible ways to finance the plans but the final implementation is based on later political decisions e.g. in connection with the state budget or other plans.

The first Action Plan to promote the organic food production in Denmark 1995

The status quo evaluation leading to the recommendations on research outlines all R&D institutions (15) already having research in organic farming and all research activities related directly or indirectly to organic farming (3).

The three activities are:

- 1) a research program running from 1993-1997 (50 million DKK 6.7 million euro)

with two focus areas: a. Basic principles for organic farming. b. Development of production methods in organic farming;

2) a recent decision to establish an organic research station; and

3) the conclusions in the national strategy for agricultural research to strengthen the knowledge base for alternative productions including organic farming.

Acknowledging organic farming as a growth area needing higher share of the agricultural research funding (870 million DKK. 116 million in 1995) than its share of farmland (1%) the recommendations were:

Recommendation no. 27: The council for organic agriculture recommends the agricultural minister to initiate a higher priority for the research area "organic farming" at the existing research and experimental institutions including the Agricultural University, and that intensive research in areas specific for organic farming as multidisciplinary research areas as soil fertility soil ecology and more are initiated. It is also recommended that the Ph.D. education be strengthened with regards to organic research.

Recommendation no. 28: The council for organic agriculture recommends the agricultural minister to initiate the establishment of an organic research station. The aim of the organic research station is to be the base for development and experimental activities concerning organic farming.

Besides these two recommendations directly aimed at the research capacity out of 65 recommendations, two more point at research areas and eight ask for analysis of development activities.

The second Danish Action Plan Development in Organic Farming 1999

The status quo evaluation in the second AP concludes that research in organic farming has grown considerably, but there is still a need for a targeted research program to help to promote organic farming. It highlights the implementation of the recommendations from AP I; establishing of the Danish Research Centre for Organic Farming (DARCOF) in September 1995 and at the same time setting aside 100 million DKK (about 13 million Euro) for a research and development program from 1996 - 1999. The objective is to produce knowledge that supports production and a closer relationship between the inherent and organic qualities of organic foods. The establishing of an organic research station and several organic workshop sites, as well as formalizing research cooperation with organic farms and a new professorship in organic plant production at the main Agricultural University in Copenhagen. It is furthermore highlighted that the research in organic is integrated in the main agricultural research institutions.

DARCOF is established as a centre without walls where scientists remain in their own environments but work across institutions. It coordinates the research from 100 researchers at 14 institutions (1999). A board and an advisory board of the end-users conduct it.

Out of 85 recommendations in the second DK action plan, besides the following three related to the organic farming research capacity, 13 recommendations point at specific research areas and 10 at analysis and development projects.

Recommendation no. 80: It is recommended that early evaluation be made of the specialist research activities which are coordinated by the Centre for

Research into Organic Farming, to include consideration of whether dissemination of the results is satisfactory.

Recommendation no. 81: It is recommended that funding for current research activities be increased to at least double the current level by the year 2003.

Recommendation no. 82: It is recommended that future research into organic farming be coordinated by the Centre for Research into Organic Farming with the involvement of the Advisory Research Committee of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries and the Organic Foods Council.

Yearly memos followed and evaluated the second Action Plan on the implementing status of the recommendations. The final memo from 2002 concludes:

No 80: The research in DARCOF has been evaluated with a very positive result though recommending further interdisciplinary and international work and a specific research school in organics. As a follow up on the evaluation, strengthened education of the researchers have already been implemented.

No 81: The funding for organic research has gone from 31 million DKK in 1995 to 55 million DKK per year 2000-2005 as a result of the second organic research program carried out by DARCOF.

No 82: DARCOF has been responsible for the coordination of the organic research with hearing of the Council for Organic Food and Farming as well as the Food Ministry Advisory Board on research.

Since 1999 there have been no more action plans. There is a third research programme "International research cooperation and organic integrity" with a funding of 40 million DKK per year in 2006-2010 financed through the agreement on the third Action Plan for the Aquatic Environment III and carried out by DARCOF.

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Aktionsplan II Økologi i Udvikling udarbejdet til ministeren for Fødevarer, Landbrug og Fiskeri af det Økologiske Fødevarerråd (1999). Strukturdirektoratet for Fødevarer, Landbrug og Fiskeri. København.

Statusnotat vedrørende implementering af Aktionsplan II: Økologi i Udvikling (2002). Fødevarerministeriet. København. www.wmp3.dk. Mette Meldgaard/ February 2008

European Organic Congress in Brussels

In the European Organic Congress organised by the IFOAM EU Group in Brussels in December 2007 many speeches were presented. Most of them related to organic farming support policies. Most of this presentation can be still downloaded at www.organic-congress-ifoameu.org. We are presenting here two relevant press release launched by the organisers, which are dealing with the EU Organic Action Plan

Brussels (6/12/2007) - "No New Action Plan", says Farm Commissioner. The European Organic Action plan should be "revised & updated" in order to provide a consistent policy throughout all agri-policy fields, with the current debate about the future of the CAP offering a "great opportunity to take serious action", according to Francis Blake, President of IFOAM (the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements). Speaking at this week's European Organic Congress* in Brussels, his call received an immediate put down from EU Farm Commissioner Mariann Fischer Boel, stating that the existing plan should be finished before a new one was discussed. So far the Commission has started putting into action 19 out of 21 of the measures listed in the Action Plan, but the new EU promotion campaign for organic food & farming, for example, should only be ready for launch early next spring, she signalled. The new regulation regarding organic production & labelling, agreed at the June Farm Council stipulated that the EU organic logo would become compulsory on food, where at least 95% of the ingredients are organic.

The new regulation is set to come into force on January 1, 2009. It will also allow national or private logos to be placed alongside the EU logo. On the "Health Check", the Congress welcomed the proposed increase in modulation, saying how some of the proposed increases in rural development funding should be targeted specifically at organic farming. It also called for "more formal recognition" on the role that the organic sector plays in soil & water conservation & the broader discussion on climate change, suggesting that targets for organic production should be set at Member State level. Moves towards a flat-rate Single Farm Payment was also welcomed.

*See <http://www.ifoam-eu.org> "The Future of Organic Food & Farming within the Reformed CAP- Reviewing the European Organic Action Plan & Future Perspectives" co-financed by DG AGRI.

*See <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu> - then go to "Statistics in focus" Issue number 69/2007

EU Congress demanded improvement of the policy framework for the organic sector

Brussels (14/12/2007) - Most speeches and presentations from the European Organic Congress (1), which took place last week in Brussels, are now available at the congress website, maintained by the organising IFOAM EU Group (2) to inform about the outcomes from the congress and provide an opportunity to comment on it. The IFOAM EU Group also invites contributions to the evaluation of the event.

The congress, which gathered a record number of more than 300 representatives of the organic sector from all over Europe, started with an opening speech by the EU Agriculture Commissioner Mariann Fischer Boel on the EU policy for the sector and concluded with a list of political recommendations, worked out by the participating stakeholders, for the improvement of the policy framework for its operation.

The conclusions from the Organic Congress demand for the following necessary steps:

- (1) To make organic farming a specific focus of the environmental measures to be developed as part of the CAP Health Check.
- (2) To ensure that some of the proposed increase in rural development funding is targeted at organic farming, in particular in regions and member states that have so far given a low priority to organic farming support.
- (3) To support the development of a dedicated organic research vision and ideas forum to act as a focus for identifying priorities in research and development and knowledge.
- (4) To improve the involvement of stakeholders in the process of reforming the EU regulation defining organic food and farming.
- (5) To maintain the integrity of organic food with reference to core values to protect against devaluing the concept as the market expands.
- (6) To continue to campaign for GMO policies that protect the GM free status of organic products and ensure that liability for contamination is consistent with the polluter pays principle.
- (7) To recognise the urgency for rapid adoption of organic production due to rapidly increasing oil prices and the prospect of oil shortages in the foreseeable future.

The congress was the major political event of the organic movement in the EU in 2007. It tackled the problems of growth of the dynamically developing organic production and consumption in the frame of the EU and national agriculture and rural development policies. More info see: <http://www.organic-congress-ifoameu.org>

More info: IFOAM EU Group, Tel. + 32-2-280 12 23, info@ifoam-eu.org, www.ifoam-eu.org

(1) The Congress "The future of organic food and farming within the reformed CAP - Reviewing the European Organic Action Plan and future perspectives" was held in Brussels, December 4-5, 2007.

(2) The IFOAM EU Group represents the 330 member organisations of IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) in the EU-27, EFTA and the candidate countries. Member organisations include: consumer, farmer and processor associations; research, education and advisory organisations; certification bodies and commercial organic companies.

IV. ORGAP internet Forum

Topic/Question: "Is the new Organic EU Logo favouring local markets?"

The public ORGAP Forum www.orgap.org, has started a new topic with the question "Is the new EU Logo supporting local markets?". External comments are welcome.

All interested can access and participate to the discussions. Before that, you are requested to register to the ORGAP Forum. Once registered, you are automatically added to the member list of the external Forum. You will receive an e-mail with your user name and your password, but your account is still inactive. Your account is activated once you receive an e-mail confirming your active membership of the Forum. Then you can log in and participate actively in the Forum.

To access the external public ORGAP Forum:

Go to www.orgap.org and click on "Forum" on the left side of the start page.

The "index page" of the forum will appear.

To view contributions (= topics), post new topics and reply to topics:

- 1) Go to the section "Log in" of the index page of the forum and enter your user name and password. As registered and active member of the forum, you are able to post your contribution/topic only once you have logged in;
- 2) In the section "public forum", click on the heading "Is the new Organic EU Logo favouring local markets?" By doing so, you open the list of topics posted to the forum;
- 3) To post your topic, please click on "new topic". There you can enter the subject and the message body;
- 4) Click on "submit" at the bottom of the page. Now your contribution will appear on the list of topics;
- 5) To view a topic, go back to the index page of the forum and click on the title of the topic in the list of topics (the title corresponds to the subject of the topic);
- 6) To reply to a topic, click on its title in the list of topics (on the index page of the forum). The message and author will appear. Click then on "post reply", enter the message body and subject, and click on "submit";
- 7) To view a topic and the replies, go to the index page of the forum and click on the title of the topic. The original text of the topic and the reply will be visible.

To edit or delete your own topics and replies:

You can only delete or edit your own topics and replies! Exception is the moderator, who can delete topics and replies posted by other members of the forum.

- 1) Go to the index page of the forum and click on the title of the topic you want to delete or edit;
- 2) Once the text of the topic or reply is visible, click on "edit" on the right side of the message. Edit the message or the subject of the topic/reply and click on submit at the bottom of the page;
- 3) Once the text of the topic or reply is visible, click on "X" (= delete) on the right side of the message and confirm.

To update your profile:

Each member of the forum is able to update only his/her own profile.

- 1) Log in to the external forum;
- 2) Click on "profile" at the top of the page;
- 3) Actualise the data, i. e. your e-mail address or password;
- 4) Click on "submit" at the bottom of the page.

To view the member list of the forum:

- 1) Access the external forum;
- 2) Click on "member list" at the top of the page.

More information: vgonzalez@agroecologia.net

V. OTHER RELATED NEWS AND EVENTS

Links between policy and organic farming in Europe.

Johannes Michelsen, Dep. of Political Science and Public Management, University of Southern Denmark.

EU-regulations introduce a political option for promoting organic farming in the Member States. Exploiting the option presupposed either a low level of conflict between organic and conventional farming based on economy, or a medium level of conflict irrespective of it being based on economy or values. This is shown by analyses on the effect of the EU-regulations on the national organic sectors in EU.

More at http://www.darcof.dk/enews/newsmail/january_2008/policy.html

Denmark: New head of DARCOF

Senior Scientist Niels Halberg has been appointed to be the new head of the Danish Research Centre for Organic Food and Farming (DARCOF). Niels Halberg has a long experience in multi-disciplinary research in organic food and farming, and comes from a position as senior scientist at the Department of Agroecology and Environment at the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, University of Aarhus. See www.darcof.dk

Malta

Organic farming is developing in Malta. The website of Malta Organic Agriculture Movement is www.moam.org.mt . More info: Mario Salerno E-mail: salerno@onvol.net

Global Organic Farming: Continued Growth.

IFOAM, FiBL and SOEL have presented new facts and figures about the organic sector at BioFach 2008. February 20th 2008

The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) and the Foundation Ecology and Agriculture (SOEL) presented the latest statistics about organic agriculture worldwide at BioFach 2008. The results of this year's study titled "The World of Organic Agriculture: Statistics and Emerging Trends 2008" were presented at the world's largest trade fair for organic products BioFach2008.

The study shows that 30.4 million hectares are currently certified according to organic standards (data as at the end of 2006). Australia continues to account for the largest certified organic surface area, with 12.3 million hectares, followed by China (2.3 million hectares), Argentina (2.2 million hectares) and the USA (1.6 million hectares). The greatest share of global organic surface area is in Oceania/Australia (42%), followed by Europe (24%) and Latin America (16%). In terms of certified land under organic management as a proportion of national agricultural area, the Alpine countries, such as Austria (13%, 361,487 hectares) and Switzerland (12%, 125,596 hectares), top the statistics. Compared to the adjusted data of the previous survey, the global organic area grew by approximately 1.8 million hectares during 2006. Growth was strongest in Oceania/Australia (more than 600,000 hectares) and Europe (more than

500,000 hectares). From the first figures available for 2007, Helga Willer of FiBL expects that the area under organic management has continued to grow.

The global market for organic products reached a value of 38.6 billion US Dollars in 2006, with the vast majority of products being consumed in North America and Europe, according to Organic Monitor. This constitutes a growth of five billion US Dollars compared to the 2005 data. Healthy growth rates are expected to continue in the coming years. Angela Caudle de Freitas, IFOAM Executive Director, suggests that the ever-growing demand for organic products offers attractive opportunities for producers - especially those in developing countries

The World of Organic Agriculture: Statistics and Emerging Trends 2008 is being presented for the ninth consecutive year at Biofach 2008. In addition to chapters reviewing organic agriculture worldwide, numerous illustrations and graphs, and completely revised reports about the emerging trends and regional development highlights on each individual continent, the study includes a comprehensive annex with the entire data set and expanded coverage of land-use data.

Performance of the global survey and production of the yearbook has been supported by Nürnberg-Messe since 2000. Starting in 2008, support is now also being provided by the Swiss State Secretariat of Economic Affairs (SECO), Berne/Switzerland, within the framework of its support activities for organic production in developing countries and by the International Trade Centre (ITC), Geneva/Switzerland, which has joined the survey as a partner. The global survey on organic farming and the publication of the yearbook have been carried out jointly by IFOAM, FiBL and SOEL since 2000. H. Willer, FiBL. E-Mail helga.willer@fibl.org. www.fibl.org

VI. ORGANIC ACTION PLANS ADDRESSES

Czech Action Plan:

Action Plan of the Czech Republic for the Development of Organic Farming until 2010. . Ministry of Agriculture, 2004.

For more information see: URL: <http://www.agronavigator.cz/ekozem/attachments/AP.pdf>

Danish Action Plan:

Danish Action Plan II Development in organic farming (Aktionsplan II kologi I udvikling). Ministeriet for Fodevarer, Landbrug og Fiskeri, 1999.

For more information see: URL: <http://www.dffe.dk/Default.asp?ID=8012>

English Action Plan:

Action plan to develop food and farming in England. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2004

For more information see: URL: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/organic/actionplan/>

German Action Plan:

Federal Organic Farming Scheme. Federal Ministry of Consumer Protection, Food and Agriculture, 2001.

For more information see: URL: <http://www.oekolandbau.de/cfsubs/pdf/010302.pdf>

Dutch Action Plan:

Dutch Policy Document on Organic Agriculture 2005-2007. Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and food quality, 2005.

For more information see: URL:

http://www9.mininv.nl/servlet/page?_pageid=112&_dad=portal30&_schema=PORTAL30&_pitem_id=92764

Action Plan of Andalusia:

Andalusian Action Plan for Organic Farming (Plan Andaluz de Agricultura Ecológica). Consejería de Agricultura y Ppesca, 2002.

For more information see: URL:

http://www.juntadeandalucia.es/agriculturaypesca/prospectiva/Ecologico1_doc.pdf

Italian Action Plan:

Italian National Action Plan for Organic Agriculture and Organic Products (Piano d'Azione nazionale per l'Agricoltura Biologica e i Prodotti Biologici). Ministro delle Politiche Agricole e Forestali, 2005.

For more information see: URL:

http://www.sinab.it/allegati_news/352/Piano_Azione_nazionale_plur15aprile05uff.pdf

Slovenian Action Plan:

Plan of Long-Term Development of Organic Farming in Slovenia (Na?rt dolgoro?nega razvoja ekoloskega kmetijstva v Sloveniji). Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, 2005..

For more information see: URL: <http://www.mkgp.gov.si/index.php?id=576>

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