

**Stakeholders view  
on policy goals  
to support the development  
of the organic farming sector:**

**Results from an EU level  
workshop**

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# Preface

The European Commission agreed on the “European Action Plan on Organic Food and Farming” in October 2004. In it the Commission proposes detailed measures for a Common Policy for the Organic Farming and Food sector, with the aim to support the development of the sector. This Action Plan provides member states, for the first time, with a common framework for the further development of policies for organic farming. For member states this provides an opportunity to stronger emphasise organic farming in their revised Rural Development Plans and develop national Action Plans for Organic Farming. The revised Rural Development Programmes will be finalised by the end of 2005 by the member states.

One effort to contribute to the further development of Organic Farming Policy in Europe is the project "Further development of Organic Farming Policy in Europe, with Particular Emphasis on EU Enlargement" (EU-CEEOPF).

In February 2005, an EU-wide workshop with selected stakeholders from each country has offered a platform to exchange ideas on the future of organic farming policy in the EU. The most important objective of this workshop was to define 5 major policy goals for the future implementation of organic farming policy at national level and to make proposals on the weight which should be given to each policy goal at different administrative levels. Close personal contact of participants in this workshop facilitated policy learning between countries and provided a platform to form alliances and decide on further action.

The objective of this report is to provide an analysis of this EU-level workshop for all participants and other interested stakeholders of the organic farming sector in Europe.

Given its timing results have the great potential to feed into the development of the new Rural Development Plans in the member states. Thus the workshop provides the chance to identify issues that could be addressed in the negotiation of the new Rural Development regulation in order to specifically address organic farming. Furthermore, this process is intended to facilitate policy learning among stakeholders of a country.

The report is structured in 5 main chapters. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the process of stakeholder involvement envisaged in this effort of which the 2<sup>nd</sup> national workshop is part. Chapter 2 outlines information on methodological procedures followed and tools used. Results of the workshop are presented and discussed in chapter 3. Chapter 4 gives a short summary of the report and provides an outlook on the future process of the project. Information on the composition of workshop groups is given in Annex A; Annex B provides an overview on the problem areas and relating policy goals named by the groups. Annex C comprises the results of the workshop's evaluation.

The results presented in this report are solely based on stakeholders' assessment.



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# 1 Background and objectives: Why a series of policy workshops?

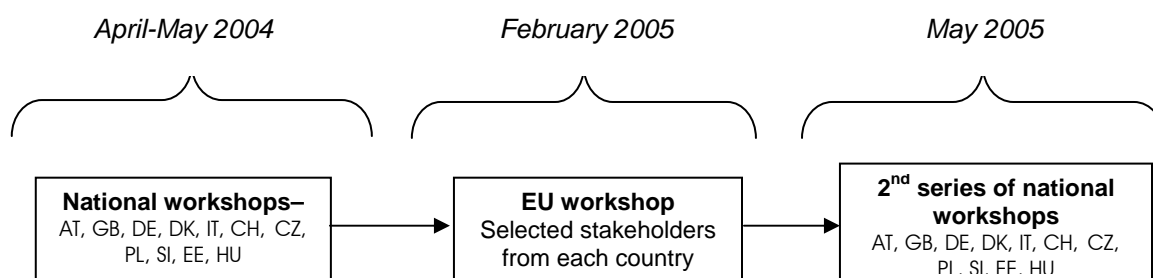
## 1.1 Background

Organic Farming has become an inherent part of European agriculture in the EU as well as in many New Member States. Accordingly, agricultural policy has addressed organic farming in all EU countries and most Central and Eastern European countries (Prazan et al. 2004). The conditions for the development of organic farming differ widely between EU and New Member States (Dabbert et al. 2004). Very different patterns of organic farming development have been combined under a new and unique market and policy framework.

To ensure a sustainable development of organic farming it is necessary to develop policy recommendations on how a complementary and sustainable development of organic farming can be fostered in old and new Member States in view of the CAP Reform 2003 policy framework and the European Action Plan on Organic Food and Farming.

To account for the national differences in development stage of the organic farming sector, as well as institutional frameworks and social capital in each country and to produce applicable policy innovation, bottom-up approaches to policy design are necessary. When addressing organic farming policy in the EU, the main objective must be to involve the old and new European Member States as well as national stakeholders and policymakers of the European Commission in identifying the parameters that could guide the further development of European organic farming policy post EU-expansion.

Based on this consideration, a structured form of participation of and consultation with these policy stakeholders has been developed to contribute to a formulation of policy recommendations at the national and EU level. Stakeholder involvement is achieved through two national and one EU level workshop (Figure 1-1), which are managed as to facilitate policy learning among stakeholders of a country and across countries.



*Figure 1-1: The workshop series*

In April/Mai 2004 a series of **national workshops** has taken place in 11 European countries (AT, GB, DE, DK, IT, CH, CZ, PL, SI, EE, HU) to assess the effectiveness of different policy instruments in each country, and to develop suggestions for 'future' policy instruments and strategies to positively influence the development of the organic farming sector in the respective country. Strengths and

weaknesses of organic farming policy, and opportunities and threats to the organic farming sector in each country were addressed and potential policy instruments were developed. One of the intentions of this workshop was to facilitate policy learning among organic sector representatives within each country and provided a first input to an EU-wide policy discussion (Häring and Vairo 2004a).

In February 2005, an **EU-wide workshop** with selected stakeholders from each country (see Table A-1) provided a platform to exchange ideas on the future of organic farming policy in the EU. The most important objective of this workshop was to define 5 major policy goals for the future implementation of organic farming policy at national level and to make proposals on the weight which should be given to each policy goal at different administrative levels. Close personal contact of participants in this workshop facilitated policy learning between countries and provided a platform to form alliances and decide on further action (Vairo et al. 2005).

In a **second series of national workshops** in all countries the design and implementation of specific national policy instruments addressing the developed EU policy goals will be discussed in detail. Furthermore, policy makers and organic and general agricultural sector representatives may discuss the distribution of responsibilities in the implementation of organic farming policy at the national level.

This series of three workshops follows a general concept of policy design and implementation:

- Identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of the organic farming sector and policy
- Definition of policy instruments to address weaknesses, opportunities and threats (only for WOT)
- Recommendations of policy goals for the development of the organic sector at the EU level
- Matching of policy instruments to national circumstances
- Implementation of policy instruments at the national level through the identification of responsibilities

Approaching policy innovation by such a series of workshops integrates the different administrative levels of policy design and implementation and provides a platform for policy makers, sector representatives and other stakeholders to exchange ideas. Furthermore, such a process can generate a linkage between the creation of a national stakeholder's network and the EU commission for future discussions.

Thus, the objectives of the described process were to assess existing agricultural policies and their impact on organic farming together with actors in the organic farming sector. Thereby relevant organic policies might be identified which may be transferred (*policy transfer*) through emulation, adaptation or simply more or less coercive acquisition (as it has happened in the case of the new EU accession countries) (Evans and Davies, 1999).

In summary, this series of workshops is an effort in bringing together stakeholders of the organic farming sector in a structured way. It is part of a larger project with the objective to develop recommendations for improving the prospects for Organic Farming growth in EU states in view of the CAP Reform 2003 policy framework:

“Identification of the dimensions of a new European Organic Farming Policy post EU-expansion” (EU-CEEOPF).

## 1.2 Objectives

The objective of this report is to present the results obtained in the EU level workshop. The main objective of this workshop was the identification of 5 major problem areas and the respective policy goals for the development of the organic sector. In other words, the most important aim of this workshop was to develop a framework for the future implementation of organic farming policy instruments at the national level, including a proposal of a possible future distribution of policy implementation to different administrative levels (EU, national, regional). The purpose was to encourage a debate and new thinking on policy initiatives: this should initiate a policy transfer process during the 2<sup>nd</sup> series of national workshops.

Thus, this report summarises organic farming policy recommendations developed by actors of the organic farming sector, relevant policy stakeholders of each of the involved European countries and advocates of Organic Farming on EU level in view of the CAP Reform 2003 and the national implementation of the European Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming.

The dissemination of these results among the participants and other interested actors of the organic farming sector shall facilitate policy learning among stakeholders of different countries and provide the base for coalitions able to generate future actions.

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Concept

Rather than defining specific policy instruments for the development of the organic farming sector, the aim of the workshop was to develop suggestions for the policy approach to adopt during country-specific policy implementation for national stakeholders.

Following the policy design process outlined before, the EU workshop will cover the following two phases:

1. Develop policy recommendations at the EU level by the identification of 5 major policy goals (based on the 5 most important problem areas) – 1<sup>st</sup> step
2. Prioritisation of policy goals – 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> steps

The identification of problem areas (1<sup>st</sup> step) was performed by a **lateral thinking exercise** (De Bono, 2003; Mind Tools, 2004; Mycoted, 2004; Richardson et al., 2003; Richardson, 2003). For what concerns the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> steps, **non-secret voting system** and **budget exercise** tools have been used.

### 2.2 Tools

#### 2.2.1 Lateral thinking and creativity by provocation

Lateral thinking is a process which may help us to change our concepts and perceptions and generate new ones and to arrive at usable ideas. Since concepts, perceptions, and ideas are involved in every activity that requires thinking, every person needs some skill in lateral thinking (De Bono 2003).

As creative ideas do not shoot out, formal and systematic techniques of lateral thinking may help to escape the restrictive effects of judgment. These techniques can be used by individuals; groups are not essential, as they are in traditional brainstorming, which is based on the "crazy" view of creativity.

The importance of technique: It is not enough just to have a creative attitude and then to wait for something to happen. We need systematic techniques that will produce new ideas. Such processes as "challenge," "alternatives," and "provocation" can all be learned as deliberate techniques which can be applied to different situations -- problem solving, improvement, opportunity design, and others (De Bono 2003).

**Provocation:** In any self-organizing information system (such as perception), it is absolutely essential to have provocation and movement, in order to cut across patterns. And crosscutting is necessary because of the asymmetric nature of patterns themselves -- that is, something that's obvious in hindsight may be invisible to foresight.

De Bono (2003) has coined the word "po" (for "Provocative Operation") to signal that a statement is intended directly as a provocation, as a deliberately irrational jump from established patterns of thinking and experience, e.g., "Po, planes should land upside down." It is as if we've purposefully jumped onto a mental side-track, from which we can then find our way back to the main track and thus open up a

whole new avenue of thinking. Various options exist: a) arising provocations, b) stepping-stone provocations and c) escape provocations of which the latter will be used in the following.

Escape provocations are deliberately set up by the creative thinker, who seizes upon any point that's "taken for granted" or normal in the situation and then proceeds to "escape" from this. After saying "po," he/she may negate the point, cancel it, drop it, or simply do without it. (Note: the "taken-for-granted" point must never be a problem, complaint, or difficulty.)

Once we have created a provocation, the next step is to move forward to the new idea. "**Movement**" is not just a suspension of judgment; it is an active mental operation. It can be a general willingness to move from an established idea to a new one, but there are also systematic and formal ways of directing the process.

- 1) Extract a Principle: We extract one principle, concept, feature, or aspect from the provocation and ignore the rest. We seek to build a new idea around this one item.
- 2) Focus on the Difference: In what way is the provocation different from the usual way of doing things? Can we move forward from that difference to a useful new idea? Even if the difference is tiny, we still focus on it, in order to defend against the idea-killing objection, "but that's the same as...".
- 3) Moment-to-Moment: We visualize the provocation being put into action -- even if this is impossible in reality. We then watch to see what would happen "moment to moment." We try to pull out a useful new idea from our "observation."
- 4) Positive Aspects: Here we focus on those aspects of the provocation that are directly positive. We ignore the rest and seek to build an idea from these.
- 5) Under What Circumstances: We look for special circumstances under which the provocation would offer some direct value, just as it is. We then seek to move forward to a useful idea, either for those circumstances or -- more usefully -- for other circumstances as well.

**An example** of provocation, **adapted to organic farming policy** could be the problem area "Food scandals in organic sector".

1) Consequences: no people would buy organic products anymore; it would be much safer to buy conventional products. More organic products would pass through the conventional channel. Organic products would be cheaper and, slowly, organic shops would close.

2) Circumstances: farmer associations would ask for deeper controls in order to guarantee consumers organic quality; public information and promotion campaigns on certification system and organic product quality would increase. Farmers would need other revenue: they would create synergies with the territory and exploit other activities. They would transform their farm in an "area" where consumers do not just buy organic products, but also get informed, eat local and typical products, make vacation.

3) Solution: in this specific case, solutions could be **policy goals**, developed in order to deal with the provocative statement "food scandals in organic sector".

- 1st policy objective: "Create organic districts in specific regions following the specialty of the region". By developing organic farming

and connected activities, promotion of organic local products will be realized. Farmers would create an “organic trail” for tourists, where people get in contact with the local culture, food, tradition and environment; a specific aspect would be developed in each farm of the “trail”. Moreover, organic food would be served during the meal and courses on organic farming would create for the consumers’ education (supported by the public promotion campaigns developed after the food scandals).

- 2<sup>nd</sup> policy objective: “Develop public information and promotion campaigns” to increase consumers knowledge on certification system;
- 3<sup>rd</sup> policy objective: “Develop the inspection system” to have deeper control to guarantee consumers organic quality.

### 2.2.2 Non-secret voting system

Voting is a manner of choosing options or, in other words, a group prioritising process. A non-secret system of voting allows participants to behave in a strategic way, since intermediate results are always visible for all the duration of the vote. Thus, for example, people can decide to change their option if they notice that a policy goal has not been voted, or strengthen a group decision.

### 2.2.3 Budget exercise

Budget exercises have been designed for distributing a budget to different spending options in a group decision process. However, a budget exercise can also be used as “reality tool” for a rating exercise. In this case the resulting numbers are not the main outcome, but the identification of priorities.

## 2.3 The workshop process

An introductory section was designed to create a pleasant, workable atmosphere among workshop participants. The rules for participating in the discussion were laid down, to ensure that everyone had the opportunity to contribute to the discussion without any individuals dominating.

A short presentation of the background of project and the overall objectives of the workshop, the presentation of the workshop procedure, the outcome of the 1<sup>st</sup> national workshops and an overview of current policy developments, particularly in relation to the Rural Development Regulation, were also included in the introductory section.

A presentation of the Rural Development Regulation particularly was intended to remind participants that workshop results have the great potential to feed into the development of the new **Rural Development Plans**, which are being developed by the member states in 2005. The workshop could provide a basis for identifying issues that need to be addressed in the negotiation of the new Rural Development plans in order to emphasise the value of having organic farming mentioned specifically in the regulation.

Finally, this EU workshop was designed to contribute to **policy learning** in the EU. Policy transfer can be an outcome of learning. Transfer of specific ideas or

programmes was emphasized by a deep and prior process of learning, as ‘policy transfer [refers] to the process by which knowledge of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in one political system (past or present) is used in the development of policies, administrative arrangements, institutions and ideas in another political system’ (Dolowitz and Marsh, 2000). Transfer can take place across time, within countries and across countries (Evans and Davies, 1999). A very broad range of objects of transfer is suggested by Dolowitz and Marsh (1996), including policy goals, policy instruments, institutions, ideas and negative lessons (Vairo and Häring, 2004)

The workshop passed through three steps (Häring et al., 2004):

- **Identification of major problem areas** by a lateral thinking exercise (which were converted in policy goals). For this session the plenary was split into 4 working groups by a randomised lottery system.
- **Prioritisation of policy goals** by a non-secret voting system in a plenary session.
- **Prioritisation of policy goals at administrative levels** by a budget exercise in a plenary session

### 2.3.1 Identification of major problem areas

The development of policy recommendations at the EU level by the identification of 5 major policy goals was based on the 5 most important problem areas identified. As decisions coming from the European Commission are defined as positive declarations, problem areas needed to be transformed into policy goals. In this way the emphasis or direction of organic farming policy at the European level was defined and can be adopted at the national level. Thus, the group focused only on what could be defined as “risks” for the organic farming sector. The results were provocative statements on events which could destroy the organic farming sector. Problem areas were identified at the EU level by a lateral thinking/creativity exercise and transformed in policy goals (see section 2.2).

In concrete terms this first session was structured into three main phases:

#### **Phase I: Groups discuss provocative questions**

A lateral thinking exercise was supposed to help the group to generate new ideas. For this exercise, groups first discussed “provocative statements/ situations” for the organic farming sector (i.e. How could we destroy the organic farming sector?).

The results were statements on which events / occurrences might destroy the sector.

#### **Phase II: Groups define 5 problem areas**

In a second step, results derived from Phase I were grouped in 4 -5 problem areas.

#### **Phase III: Groups define 5 policy goals**

In a third step, groups then identified policy goals deriving from the discussion on problem areas. The results were grouped in 4 to 5 policy goals.

Which challenges or opportunities arise from each of these problem areas? For each problem area, participants had tried to develop policy goals and how to pursue them. The most important task here is to introduce a strategic vision in view of alternatives to the destructive aspects.

At the end of the day, group facilitators documented the summarised group results and the outcome of the discussions on this day.

### 2.3.2 Prioritisation of policy goals

The objective of this discussion was to group policy goals resulting from the different groups as appropriate.

In a Plenary session, facilitators of all groups briefly (5 min) presented their 4 to 5 most important policy goals to the plenary. Each participant had the possibility to object/question one or more policy goals presented if s/he strongly disagreed with them (minority report). In this case s/he needed to justify his/her difference of opinion in order to convince other workshop participants.

Finally, in order to reduce the resulting approx. 15-20 policy goals to a total of 5 policy goals, a non-secret voting system was adopted. For this exercise, each participant receives a defined number of balls and had to distribute them to the ca. 15-20 policy goals according to his personal priorities. In this way, participant's behaviour can be tactical (see section 2.2).

### 2.3.3 Prioritisation of policy goals at administrative levels

For this third session, a budget exercise was developed. Each participant received 300 million Bio-Euros and had the task to distribute these funds

- a) among the 5 most voted policy goals, at
- b) different administrative levels (EU, national, regional).

In this case the budget exercise was only a "reality tool" to perform a group rating to identify the most important policy goals and on which administrative level specific goals should be implemented.

The implementation of the specific policy instruments according to the defined European policy goals will be discussed during the 2<sup>nd</sup> national workshop.

### 2.3.4 Participants

The participants of the workshop were invited from two different groups. On the one hand, two or three representatives of each of the national workshops in the eleven countries were invited to represent the national viewpoints on organic farming policy and the specific developments in their country.

On the other hand, a range of experts on EU policy on organic farming and representatives of diverse organic and non-organic interest groups operating at EU level were invited. This way not only their diverse viewpoints on European general and organic farming policy was introduced to the discussion but also their specific knowledge of policy development within the European Commission. This group consisted e.g. of members of the European Commission, representatives of organic interest groups (e.g. IFOAM EU group), representatives of nature protection



organisations etc. These representatives /organisations were selected in a step-wise procedure based on a list of experts identified by a policy network analysis of the European organic farming sector (Moschitz and Stolze, 2005). This list was then sent to five different experts on organic farming policy in the EU with requests for amendments or comments. Finally, approximately 30 experts were invited. For each expert who rejected to participate or who failed to confirm within three requests, an alternative expert was sought. The final list of participants is provided in Appendix A.

As a matter of fact, there are limitations on the representativeness of the selection of participants. As an example, not all European countries were represented. During the workshop, the split-up of the participants in small groups of approx. ten people was achieved by a randomised lottery system.

### 3 Problem Areas and Policy Goals in Organic Farming Policy – A Stakeholder Assessment

The results presented in this documentation are the synthesised but unfiltered statements on problem areas and policy goals named by the workshop's participants. Thus, the results are based on the opinions of stakeholders of very different professional backgrounds and cultural settings. At times this resulted in quite contrasting statements on the same issue. In summary, the presented results are the original statements by the workshop participants and do not represent a group consensus.

For the documentation of the workshop, identical data collection procedures were applied in the small groups and minutes were taken following the same scheme. In this report, the statements made in the workshop are reproduced without any interpretation. If necessary, only some linguistic adjustments were made. The aim of this report is to document and summarize the results of the workshop- without giving a scientific assessment.

#### 3.1 Problem areas and policy goals in Organic Farming Policy

A large number of problem areas and policy goals in organic farming policy were identified by the stakeholders. This chapter brings together the groups' results as well as the discussions led in the groups. It should be taken into consideration that linguistic problems of some of the participants have led to some misunderstandings during the discussions.

In the groups' discussions, there were some intersections as sometimes the same topics were discussed under different headings. To structure the report and to better mirror the discussions led in the workshop, the policy goals named by the groups were regrouped and are described compendiously. Therefore, this chapter is divided into 11 subchapters relating to different thematic topics. Each subchapter first presents the problem areas concerning the respective topic, and then specifies the referring policy goals named in the groups' discussions.

In the following, all the problem areas and policy goals discussed are presented, not taking care for their "importance". In addition to that, Chapter 3.2 describes the discussions on the five most voted goals.

##### 3.1.1 Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)

###### Problem Areas

The threat of GMO-contamination was considered to be **one of the most important dangers** to OF (Organic Farming) by many participants. It was pointed out that except GMOs, none of the dangers mentioned had the potential to destroy the OF sector.

The **irreversibility** of damages caused by GMOs was mentioned as a central point. It was feared that once GMOs had entered the European market, it was very difficult to control. It was forecast that contamination would grow continuously and in a few years, the minimum level of GMO-contamination would have to be raised. Participants did not believe that the concept of “**coexistence**” could work. If GMOs were grown, OF would not have a chance to be unaffected and would obviously be contaminated (e.g. by conventional fields and seeds as well as conventional food stuff imports). It was stated that, after some time, the **thresholds** for GMO in seeds and food in organic agriculture would be adapted to the thresholds in conventional agriculture.

Concerning the “coexistence”-concept, it was stated that **harmonising tendencies in EU** were a threat to OF in some countries. It was discussed whether -in order to ensure the continuity of a GMO free agriculture- it would be better to create national GMO laws and arrangements instead of an EU-wide commitment.

Participants stated that for organic agriculture, a contamination of organic products could lead to a **loss of confidence** by the consumers - and this could become a major problem to the organic market. One participant expressed his fear that once agriculture was contaminated, GMOs would be accepted in society as farmers and consumers trusted too much in science.

## Policy Goals

Concerning policy goals, there was one position saying that co-existence was not possible, and therefore **GMOs had to be completely banned** in all agriculture. GMOs could not be tolerated at all; all agriculture had to be GMO-free.

Other participants said that it was no longer possible to totally ban all GMOs. They pleaded for GMO avoidance by **very strict rules** and the establishment of GMO-free zones. Therefore, a strict regulatory framework should be delivered:

Many participants called for a strict **EU-wide common coexistence legislation** and EU-wide control. There should be a coexistence minimum law, and there should however be place for stricter national regulations that protected organics. It was the task of EU legislation to guarantee **zero contamination for seed and food**. The threshold for labelling should be at the detection level (0.1%). Other participants called for special thresholds for organic products and seeds (at 0%).

Concerning **liability**, it was argued that GMO users should be made responsible to pay for environmental and agricultural damages as well as analysing and separating costs. Thus regarding GMOs, the implementation of the **polluter pays principle** on EU and National level was said to be of particular importance. It was stated that strict liability rules had to be harmonized EU-wide. There was a discussion if “full liability” really covered all cases. There were lots of costs without damage. The possible polluter should be charged in advance and pay the costs arising in advance.

An important point mentioned by many people was the implementation of **GMO free regions**. At least, it was considered essential that the EU did not forbid the National Member States to forbid GMOs: regions had to be allowed to declare themselves as “GMO-free zones”. At the moment, the argumentation to create

GMO-free zones was difficult as it needed to be linked to economic and social reasons. It was stated that only a “GMO-free Europe” could guarantee the possibility of buying GMO-free food. It was discussed whether one should start “GMO-free”- initiatives at regional or at European level. A regional GMO ban was considered to be a concrete, attainable goal. It was proposed to start regional initiatives/strategies in collaboration with the local consumers.

Concerning **society**, participants claimed that the costs and risks of GMOs should be shown to the consumers. As there was a large disapproval of GMO products among European consumers, pressure could then be put on national policies to act in favour of a GMO ban. Moreover, one participant suggested teaching ecology to politicians and to genetic scientists.

### 3.1.2 Credibility/ Integrity

#### Problem Areas

Many participants stated that **food scandals** in the organic sector had the potential to severely damage the OF sector. Especially if the organic sector grew too much, the risk of fraud would increase. It was stated that on the one hand, the inspection system was inadequate. On the other hand, food scandals could arise in spite of a good control system. It was criticized that **oversight** from the member states as well as EU-oversight was missing. Concerning food safety problems, one participant said the problem was how OF organisations reacted on scandals. They should be more proactive.

Participants agreed that consumers’ trust in organic food could be easily lost in food scandals. A **loss of credibility** in the rules was considered a big problem for OF. In that context, it was pointed out that there were too many chemicals allowed in OF and OF processing. The EU procedures on additives (e.g. nitrite) could also lead to a loss of credibility. Another point mentioned was that diseases by micro organisms or bacteria could spread because no pesticides were used in OF.

Another point considered as a problem was the **distance between consumers and producers**: consumers often did not know where their food came from. In that context, it was stated that there was a high concentration in the food industry and food chains and that organic food was often **too processed** (“industrial”). It was assumed that consumers were negatively influenced if organic food looked the same as conventional food.

#### Policy Goals

To face the problem of credibility and integrity, many measures concerning **safety and research** were discussed, with the main aim to target research and development on the organic sector’s priorities. It was stated that research should be goal-oriented, aimed at solving problems and geared to the organic sector’s needs. Specific R&D projects were needed to overcome obstacles in OF. Therefore, research should be supported.

More specifically, participants stated that **research in support of policy** was necessary. One participant said that research on bacteria was especially important.

Furthermore, participants called for **organic research standards** and an Organic HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) concept. Another participant said that many people in OF were afraid of science, but this had to be overcome as science could support organic.

There was a discussion on **technological safety in agriculture and food**: in the whole agricultural concept of food safety, everybody was still too focused on “chemical” safety and the presence of residues. Instead, a system oriented approach should be used aiming at systems that are safe.

Besides measures in research, participants said that the integrity of **regulation inspection** had to be strengthened to address problems of credibility. An important point mentioned was to create an effective **oversight** over the inspection organisations. It was discussed if it was good that the member states had the oversight or if it was better to create an effective international (EU-wide) oversight over inspection. Concerning safety, people required strict rules from the EU framework for the national **accreditation of control bodies**. Higher **penalties for frauds** were demanded as well as more proactive measures, e.g. monitoring. It was said that in the organic sector certain critical areas should be **more monitored** and documented, such as mycotoxins.

### 3.1.3 Self-organisation

#### Problem Areas

Concerning the **internal structures** of the OF sector, it was stated that the self-organisation and the capacity as well as the lobby of the sector (IFOAM, national organisations etc.) were weak. Participants pointed out that there was too much confusion and bureaucracy inside the movement and that the organic associations’ management was inadequate.

Furthermore, the **lack of networking** within the organic sector was criticised. It was said that there was a lack of initiative and co-operation/ alliances. Organic associations were competing with each other (e.g. in standards) instead of competing with conventional actors. Among the certification bodies, there was also a negative competition. A participant stated that as the diversity of organizations in the OF sector increased, they became more and more market players.

But it was also pointed out that **conformity** (as opposed to protest) on a policy level was dangerous. It went along with OF being integrated in the conventional sector/mechanisms. The OF sector should instead perceive itself as a pioneer movement. Strong lobbying and the creation of values were needed to sustain the sector. Organic organizations had to define and change their roles and push the government forward.

In that context, the question was asked if the organic movement was a victim of its own success- as the agenda it was setting was **not radical enough**. Sector stakeholders were not ambitious enough: at the moment, OF aimed at just 5% of the market, instead of 50%. It was considered dangerous if stakeholders considered OF as being limited to small scale production and just called for more regulation.

Very practically, one participant claimed that there were **not enough advisors** for OF.

## Policy Goals

To address problems of self-organisation, **capacity building** was considered important. Participants said it was important to develop a strong political lobby for OF to make the organic movement gain importance. Especially the power of organic **lobbying** at European level should be increased. When speaking with one tongue, organic actors could influence national organic politics. Thus, it was important for people in the organic movement to work together. **Co-operation and the exchange of ideas** of organic associations and bodies had to be promoted. Concerning internal relationships, participants claimed that the co-ordination of organic actors should improve especially concerning evidences of success (environment, nature, animal welfare, local production, economy).

Therefore, the **knowledge** about OF among advisors, trainers and farmers had to be improved. Training of organic farmers should be mandatory. It was also proposed to build an alliance **not only within the organic sector**, but also among OF actors and consumers, environmental groups, conventional farmers, trade unions and water related institutions- to stimulate external support for OF.

### 3.1.4 Identity/ Relation to Conventional Farming

#### Problem Areas

Participants stated that the OF **identity** had got lost and that the “Organic Vision” had not been renewed. But as OF food reflected an integrated approach, it needed a strong identity. The problem was that organic actors did not have visions, e.g. of an alternative model of agriculture. They did not, as elaborated above, agree upon their aims and core values.

Analyzing the identity problem of OF, one participant said that the description of Organic was too broad: as it **tried to please too many interests**, it had become unclear for consumers. In that context, it was also stated that consumer expectations in relation to sustainability of OF were exaggerated.

An expert stated the problem that the “**small is beautiful**”-attitude was widespread in the organic movement. This attitude was considered as antiquated as it restrained further growing. In this context it was discussed whether the **loss of small-scale farming** in agriculture was a threat. People agreed that it was a threat for rural communities because small farms were crucial when focusing on rural development and sustainability in the rural areas. On the other hand, small farms were considered to be irrelevant for food safety. One participant called for a redefinition of OF: it should be discussed whether efficiency or rural sustainability were the main aim.

Concerning organic farmers, it was said that the **identification of organic farmers** with organic farming/ with the organic idea was low. Farmers should therefore consider and improve their image. Concerning the **relation of organic farming to conventional farming**, a participant said that inside the

conventional farming sector, there were no ideals concerning sustainable production. Farmers were often just interested in earning money. Therefore, they did not have the motivation to change to OF.

Moreover, conventional farmers often refused to produce OF products because of **ideological restraints** to enter the sector -or even because of a hostile attitude towards OF. One cause therefor seemed to be the competition between farmers to have the **best yield**. As organic yields were lower, farmers hesitated to grow organically. Another cause for refusing to produce organic lay in a **hostile attitude of mainstream agricultural organizations** towards OF.

Furthermore, chemistry companies supporting the conventional sector had been strongly lobbying against OF. Another point concerning the relation to conventional farming regarded the “Greening” of conventional agriculture. The conventional sector was doing a lot to show that OF products were not healthier or of better quality than others. If **the distinction of organic and conventional got lost** there was no reason for consumers to buy organic.

On the other hand, people also claimed that organic farming was **too “inside looking”** and not open enough for ideas from outside the “movement”. The OF sector was considered incapable of speaking outside the organic world/ alliance and did not try to build “external” alliances.

In this context, a participant said that it could be a treat if organic food was only seen in terms of **food safety**. A discussion was led about the definitions and goals of “food security” and “food safety”. A participant claimed that only organic production could assure food safety.

## Policy Goals

Concerning the problem area of organic identity, participants said that organic actors had to **develop a European organic vision**. Therefore it was considered important for the organic sector to **develop new visions** about organic farming, otherwise consumers would lose interest in OF. It was considered inevitable, due to new problems discovered, to redefine the perception and the intention of OF and the further development of the sector.

The goal should be to make OF a role model for sustainable development and agriculture. Beyond, OF should become a role model for food sovereignty and multifunctionality. In this context, it was discussed if OF was just an agricultural issue or also concerned non agricultural issues. The question was if OF could be **a role model for the whole society** or if it only had relevance inside the agricultural sector.

At any rate, organic stakeholders should **get out of the niche mentality** and define “Organics 2010” and the “ideal world” organic standards. The aim should be a European “Go Organic” Plan. To reach this, the organic sector should leave the “close” organic sector and try to socialise with the conventional world.

On the other hand, OF had to be careful **not to lose leadership compared to conventional agriculture in sensitive areas** regarding sustainability (e.g. nitrate leaching, biodiversity) as well as concerning the quality of food.

One participant claimed that an **umbrella/overall frame** was needed so that everybody in the EU knew the way OF was going. Of course on a national level countries could take different approaches to achieve the overall goal.

As **concrete measures** to strengthen the OF sector's identity, participants demanded to reduce the consumption of resources regarding organic practices and to reduce the carbon dioxide output of OF systems. Mixed farming systems should be encouraged and the organic farming sector should be made totally independent from inputs of the conventional sector.

### 3.1.5 Standards

#### Problem Areas

Concerning organic standards, it was discussed that it was **difficult to find the right balance** between too idealistic standards and too weak standards.

On the one hand, experts stated that OF standards were too idealistic and that there was an overambitious drive for higher organic standards. **Too little national differentiation** of standards was possible. Participants also denounced the **Over-Regulation** in OF standards: EU Reg. 2092 attempted to regulate every potential occasion. Strict sets of EU rules made organic standards too difficult to achieve and demotivated innovative actors (e.g. processors). The same problem existed concerning general EU standards for food: a local, organic apple often did not comply with the norms. In these cases, it was also proposed to admit more regional variation.

On the other hand, participants said that there were too many national variations in standards. People also thought of **qualitative problems** of OF standards: they were afraid that standards could become too close to conventional farming and lose quality. With rising conventional standards, conventional farmers became more and more ecological and the difference to OF was not obvious to the consumer anymore. It was discussed if adapting standards to changes made in conventional farming made sense.

Thus, some participants were afraid of **lowering/ watering standards** in OF. They feared that the EU legislation lowered organic standards. It was said that standards for OF were **not clear enough** for the consumer to trust in the sector; EU inspection and standards were not considered good enough to satisfy consumers' expectations as there were too many exceptions in the actual OF rules (e.g. in Denmark, 10% of conventional feed is allowed in organic farming). It was also stated that the control system was unreliable and existing standards were already not properly enforced.

In the context of improving OF standards, a participant said that OF was not ambitious enough to produce food in a more natural/ sustainable way (which, in the past, had been the core idea of being organic). The production of food in OF should take place within a **renewable sustainable cycle** to avoid negative effects on the environment. For example, despite global warming, OF also depended on fossil fuels and there were no requirements for OF to use less fossil fuel or alternative forms of energy.



## Policy Goals

To address problems in relation to organic standards, participants pointed out that standards should be **simple and clear**, motivational and principle-based. There was a discussion whether standards should be more or less detailed.

Participants said that OF standards became more and more detailed and complex due to the fact that every actor (processors, farmers etc.) always attempted to find out how far it was possible to go and interpreted the standards as freely as possible. As certification was crucial to OF, there was no way out of more detailed standards. So a conflict was identified: on the one hand, regulations needed to be clear and of high quality and thus **detailed enough**, but on the other hand stay **operational**. Simple standards could mean a decrease in quality which was detrimental. But: the less detailed regulations were, the wider was the space for interpretation. Therefore a unique interpretation of the regulations was important.

Participants even asked for more standards: it was said that as there were no standards for processed food (i.e. wine or olives), processing standards had to be defined throughout the EU. Others asked for the implementation of environmental standards. But there was a discussion whether **new standards were really necessary**. On the one hand, new standards meant more confusion. But on the other hand, organic had to include other things like fair trade, social standards, 100% recirculation of nutrients etc. One participant stated that new standards were well, but with another label than the organic one. A participant said that it was not the duty of OF to care for fair trade.

It was also mentioned that OF standards had to get better: if problem areas were discovered, **standards had to be improved**. As an example, some early warning obligation should be included in organic standards in necessary cases, such as for diseases in animal safety. Another claim was that there should be **no derogations**. If there were derogations, a fixed deadline would be essential. On the other hand, an expert said that standards should be made “carrot” rather than “stick”.

It was demanded from different sides to establish risk assessment based inspection/certification procedures. A **risk-oriented approach** towards rules and control could result in high quality audit systems. It was also called for the revision of Annex III concerning auto control and a risk-analysis. But there it was discussed that risk based systems might not work in every country.

Participants said that **technological safety** was important in agriculture and food production. As an example, it was stated that concerning all Annexes, new procedures for the approval of additives etc. were important. But then it was discussed whether standards should only be technical or also have social demands. One had to bear in mind that standards had started as consumer protection regulation and now went out as a farmer protection regulation. The original aim of **consumer protection** should not be forgotten.

Concerning capacity building against the background of standards, it was suggested that an **EU expert group** for sustainable agriculture should be implemented and that cooperating associations of certifiers should be created.

Many participants claimed that the implementation of rules and standards should be unified and harmonised. **Harmonisation** was considered useful for the accreditation of certifiers and all the regulations concerning organic production,

processing and marketing. But some people said that **equivalence did not automatically mean similarity**: regional variations should still be accepted and promoted. The problem then was who decided on what was equivalent. Some participants called for distinctive food safety regulations for **small-scale processing**. Another point mentioned in the context of harmonisation was that a coexistence of the **EU logo with national and regional logos** could be useful.

### 3.1.6 Inspection/ Certification

#### Problem Areas

Excessive (EU) **bureaucracy** was mentioned as a threat to OF by many people. The administrative burdens for organic farmers and processors were considered too high. Farmers and especially small scale processors had to do too much recording, reporting, filling in forms etc. It was also stated that legislation was too complicated, especially for proceeding.

The inspection and certification system was criticised because it was too **complicated and expensive**. Participants said that the control system did not work due to very different interpretations and very different inspection processes in the EU countries. As each member state and control party made their own definition and interpretation of EU Reg. 2092/92 concerning processes for certification and inspection, **OF was not the same in every country**. It was stated that certification in other areas, e.g. concerning GMOs and residues was not harmonized either. In this context, the Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement (TBT) was mentioned which tried to ensure that regulations, standards, testing and certification procedures did not create unnecessary obstacles.

A participant expressed his fear that **internal technical struggle** in control systems and fraud inside the organic chain might provoke scandals and cause a loss of consumers' trust.

#### Policy Goals

Concerning the inspection system, many participants called for a **simplification of the procedures** for inspections. One participant stated that bureaucracy should instead be transferred to conventional farmers. It was claimed that **common criteria** for inspections were important. Another proposition was to switch the grant aid from conversion funding to support for low cost inspection and certification. **Controls in the field** should be increased; they should be more real and less bureaucratic. But one participant also said that a high frequency of control did not automatically mean higher consumer confidence. Instead, EU-oversight over the control bodies was considered to be more useful.

Some people were discussing the development of **a holistic approach** to standards setting and the inspection system. A problem mentioned was that inspection was negatively burdened and farmers were only anxious about following the rules. Instead, a positive approach to inspection should be found. The integrity of inspection had to be strengthened by laying the focus on the farmer and accentuating the advisory role of inspection. It was also claimed to **remove the competition** between certification/ inspection bodies.

**Harmonisation** was also considered important concerning the inspection system and for the accreditation of certifiers.

### 3.1.7 Policy

#### Problem Areas

Many Participants said that there was **no political backup** for organic farming, and that OF was marginalized in agricultural policy. Policy makers on a national and local level were not interested in OF. It was also claimed that there were **no clear goals** and principles and no political strategy respectively in EU policy.

Participants stated that there was no real organic agriculture support programme- the agro-environmental programmes did not really meet OF. Furthermore, the Rural Development (RD) regulation at EU level was criticized. The **role of OF in Rural Development Policy** (RDP) should be defined more clearly. It was criticised the current agricultural policy pointed much on the rural development plans- but OF was not even mentioned in the plans. It was feared that the implementation of the CAP at a national level could lead to a competition with conventional policies- as conventional farmers got more transfer payments. In such a case, organic farmers could tend to reconvert.

Another point of criticism was that OF was in a **“policy ghetto”** and not integrated in other policy areas (e.g. tax-, environmental-, RD-, health- and consumers policy).

It was also stated several times that **political support for OF** was weakening. EU budgets were too low and the financial perspective of EU spending in pillar one and two kept the OF budget down. On the national level, agro-environmental programmes were reduced. An expert said that as organic stakeholders were not ambitious enough and reduced their aims to 5 % of market share, OF was losing even more political support.

It was criticised that the **external benefits of OF** as well as the costs of conventional agriculture were not considered in policies. An expert said that if **fiscal taxation policy** did not change towards the implementation of the “Polluter Pays Principle” in a certain time frame, OF would be condemned to long term direct payments. This might be detrimental in a longer term. On the other hand, one participant said that no new instruments were necessary, but that the existing instruments just had to be used in an optimal way.

Concerning the **EU Organic Action Plan**, it was said that the Action Plan did not have a special funding. But an EU Action plan without a financial basis was considered to be useless. Another point mentioned was that the policy support concerning supply/ demand was unbalanced: It was absurd to spend more than 100 Mill. € on production, and less than 15 Mill. € on market/ consumer behalfs. It was also criticised that there was not enough **investment support** for organic processing.

A remarkable statement concerning political support was that there were **too many direct state payments** (esp. per ha). Instead of money, the government should give advice and assistance (services). Otherwise, farmers who were just doing organic for the money re-converted as the money ran out.

Concerning **research**, participants said that research activities on OF were missing and had to be supported. More precisely, it was criticised that there was **no innovation** in OF and that the technical development in OF was too slow. A very practical problem mentioned was that **machinery** was developing to be too heavy and that small machinery suitable for OF was hard to find. It was stated that especially long term-research on the positive effects of OF on health and nature was missing. It was considered to be dangerous to just pretend that organic production was better without proving it. An expert stated that there was a **lack of market data** and of specific organic statistics.

## Policy Goals

Many participants claimed that policy had to have clear principles; state its objectives clearly and therefore **set quantitative targets**. EU policy should define a goal for OF percentage of market share as well as UAA. The RD Regulation should indicate a minimum percentage for OF. Examples mentioned in that context went from “10% of OF in 2008” to “more than 50% of OF in 2010”. It was discussed whether a number should be fixed or not. On the one hand, it was claimed that goals needed numbers. On the other hand, it was stated that quantitative goals were contradictory to the earlier “small is beautiful” organic ideology. It was argued that a way between mainstream and niche had to be found. The ultimate goal of OF should be to turn the entire agricultural sector green.

Concerning the EU CAP (Common Agricultural Policy), participants called for **more rights and money for OF**. Organic farming should become the role model of EU agricultural policy. The EU CAP should support only positive values. It was also claimed that EU support should be coupled with incentives for integrating economical, environmental and social benefits and that the EU Reg. 2072/91 had to be de-centralized. The environmental regulation should be stronger and the European Union should **increase agri-environmental programmes**. The rural development policy had to turn towards organic. A **specific dedication for OF in the 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar** should be established. Money inside the rural development should be transferred to OF.

Participants called for the preparation and implementation of **national action plans** for OF with a sufficient budget. On the one hand, National action plans were important to set clear targets for organic farming in each EU-member state. On the other hand, the 2092/91 Organic Action Plan should be mentioned in the EU Regulation on the RD Regulation. It was demanded that OF had to be prioritised in **all policy fields**, and an Action Plan on OF should be implemented in all sectors (e.g. in the environment, health, quality).

As a specific political measure to strengthen OF, many participants claimed that **public procurement** of organic food had to be enlarged. It was also mentioned that more money for **research** on OF was necessary to solve organic production problems and to show the differences of different production methods. Therefore, research expenditure in OF had to be increased and a research program for OF had to be implemented. The effects of OF on human health, nature etc. should be investigated, based on long-term-research. Research should also be invested into the investigation of consumer behaviour.

**Food sovereignty** and the regionalisation of markets as a part of EU-agriculture policy were also mentioned as policy goals (each state should have the right to control its own domestic food supply). But there were discussions on that item.

The introduction of the **polluter pays principle** in agriculture was a main claim from many people. A tax on the pollution of the environment was considered necessary: agricultural production should pay all external costs of its production, e.g. by taxes on pesticides or nitrogen ("**green taxes**"). Such a tax system should be stimulated EU-wide. At the same time, the delivery of public goods should be rewarded. This could be done by a reduction of VAT for environmental friendly farming systems and lower taxes on organic products.

To establish the preconditions for **capacity building** in the organic sector, it was suggested to create advisory boards for RDP, where an **exchange of experiences** on possibilities within RDP could take place. Training for Organic actors should be provided concerning the RD Regulation. It was also proposed that national support should be made available for capacity building and that **governmental programs** should be initiated for capacity building and networking in NGOs. It was suggested that the EU should support the IFOAM EU office. It was also proposed to stimulate a broad stakeholder involvement in national policy discussion by **national platforms**. It was considered important to continue a process like the current workshop. As another concrete measure, a **workshop** to formulate an appropriate logo policy was proposed. It was also suggested to create a network of **demonstration farms**. Another point concerning capacity building was that it was important to increase the awareness of different external actors on OF, e.g. government **politicians**. More formation and information for politicians and public officers was therefore important.

### 3.1.8 Communication

#### Problem Areas

Participants said that there was not enough communication with consumers. Consumers did not understand what Organic was. There were too many logos, brands, names and the existing **labels were unclear**. Consumers' trust was getting lost because they often had no more direct contacts to farmers and because their expectations often did not conform to reality. Another problem was seen in the fact that consumers "trusted in science, not in traditions" (people believed in the superiority of GMO food etc.). This was considered to be due to the conventional farming lobby, which argued against OF.

Especially the added value of OF and the integrated **benefits of OF** (concerning health, environment, biodiversity...) respectively were often not enough communicated. Organic stakeholders should be careful not to lose the Unique Selling Point of OF, which should be worked out better.

Concerning the communication between stakeholders, it was stated that an **institutionalized opinion making process** between stakeholders (e.g. communication platforms) was missing. It should be fixed in the National Action Plan. As farmers were sometimes alienated from OF, and did not have enough

knowledge about organic farming, communication with other conventional farmers was mentioned as another central point.

A point of discussion was the question of what communication meant in that context. There was not only the gap of communication between farmers / consumers / stakeholders but also the lack of communication on “what organic farming was”.

## Policy Goals

Participants said that it was important to develop an integrated communication strategy on organic food and farming addressing the multiple sector benefits. Its goal should be to widen consumers’ as well as politicians’ understanding of the vision and the merits of organic farming and food. In this context, it was suggested making **public information campaigns** about OF. These campaigns should raise consumer’s awareness of OF benefits. It was proposed to sustain campaigns with a bottom up approach as it was important to enable personal experiences: people had to taste, feel and smell organic food. Another way of giving public information to consumers was education in **schools**: food and agriculture education should be made compulsory at schools, and lectures about organic agriculture should be mandatory.

It was discussed whether it was be useful to make the **EU-logo** compulsory to inform consumers. One participant stated that a better EU-logo should be promoted. People agreed that it was necessary to have a label guaranteeing the origin of products.

In this context, the idea of **public procurement** of organic was again mentioned: the state should give a good example. Governments that believed that supporting organic was reasonable, they should also buy organic themselves and give clear commitments for OF (“In organic we trust”). It was also considered helpful if good sports results were linked to organic food (the EU champion team in football should eat organic food).

To convince the consumers of buying organic food, more **transparency** was important. Investments in food **quality research** were necessary as well as money for research to identify the benefits of OF (health, environment). Experts stated that it was important to agree upon common, clear and standardised messages to the consumers throughout the EU.

In the context of communication, the importance of **capacity building** was mentioned again. Capacity building on **governmental level** (horizontal) was considered important: governments should exchange their ideas about how to promote organic farming best. From the government’s side, it was also considered important to develop a **communication strategy** with the stakeholders - and to support NGO communication in ecology and agriculture unbureaucratically. It was stated that capacity building of the **organic sector** was important to develop co-operation and to implement a better lobbying strategy. Associations should be created and links along the food chain (between and among actors) had to be reinforced. More exhibitions and more training for organic actors were important.

### 3.1.9 Market problems

#### Problem Areas

The big **gap between demand and production** was considered as the main threat for OF by some participants. A surplus in organic products was considered to be good for the environment but a problem for the market. The problem was that the interaction of OF production and the food market was low. Small producers could not enter the market and only large organic producers could meet the demand of the retailers.

Especially in the new member states, quite a different problem seems to occur: **OF could often not fit the demand**. It was stated that in Hungary, the numbers of livestock were too low, so that actual OF systems did not offer enough meat. In that context, participants discussed if a lack of supply could also destroy the sector.

**Financial pressure on farmers** was mentioned as a big problem for OF. Resulting from the problem of an unbalanced demand and supply, many participants said that **prices for organic products** were too low (e.g. in supermarkets). Cheap prices for organic products were good for the consumers but bad for the farmers. It was said that- without special subsidies for OF, it was very difficult to survive for farmers. But subsidies could become dangerous for OF: if OF became dependant on subsidies, decreasing payments would be the end for OF. Everybody agreed that farmers needed fair prices and fair trade. It was stated that if organic farming's profits were not at least as high as conventional ones, OF would disappear.

In this context, the **power of retailers** was identified as a problem. The supermarket and distribution system was getting more and more similar to that of conventional food. In the food chain, **supermarkets** were considered as the most powerful actors. Benefits often went to retailers, not to the farmers. Supermarkets were destroying economic viability by aggressive pricing: as soon as the product was in surplus, they squeezed down prices, or imported foreign products even when there were enough domestic products. A participant said that 75% of the whole food market was dominated by 2 retailers – thus there was a need for farmers to work professionally with these retailers. The fear was expressed that as it was not possible to handle small scales and relatively high prices in the consumers' discount mentality- and that therefore retailers might stop accepting OF products.

Another point mentioned in this context was that the **distribution** of organic products was unprofessional. The organic supply chain should be professionalized and new and effective systems for the presentation of products should be created. Concerning processing, it was claimed that there were **problems between producers and processors** and that the organic supply chain was taken over by conventional processors. In long term regard, this could lead to the destruction of the organic sector.

Participants said that the **organic market was stagnating**. This was considered due to the fact that OF was not open to the dynamics of the market. The organic sector **lacked innovative capacity**, there were no (or not enough) new organic products being developed. OF actors should find new ways in trading organic products, to meet consumers' demands. It was claimed that therefore, innovation in a broad way was necessary from all stakeholder groups (including "specific

organic policy” innovations). As processing, especially small-scale-processing, in the organic sector was missing, **processing innovation** was needed.

One participant mentioned the problem that there was **no interaction of OF and mainstream agriculture**. If OF went totally independent, it would lack a competitive edge and innovativeness. As the economic performance of organic farming was bad compared to the conventional one, it was claimed that the sector should get grown-up, change its habit, and get “modern” in an economical sense.

**Concerning consumers**, participants said that a strong **increase of consumer prices** could be a threat for OF -as many consumers thought that prices for organic products were already too high. Another point mentioned in this context was the **general economic crises** and the slowing down of EU and world economy respectively. An economic downturn and as a consequence thereof a decrease in income and welfare meant that consumers had less to spend and so bought more cheap food, not taking care for the origin.

## Policy Goals

To counteract the problem of market pressure on organic farmers, participants stated that **market development** for Organic should be **supported** as part of RDP. Marketing activities in OF should be supported financially on local, National and EU level. It was said that EU support to market development should have a focus on national market development.

To overcome market disadvantages of OF, a participant said that all financial support in **CAP Pillar 1 should be finished**. Subsidies should instead be targeted. It was also proposed to extend modulation. Organic farmers -as a role model for agricultural policy- should be supported stronger on EU as well as on national level. But contrary to that, one participant said that we should rather trust the dynamic of the market.

To strengthen the position of OF, it was proposed to make OF obligatory in sensitive areas. Other suggestions were to encourage local producer/consumer networks and to make certification free. One participant expressed the idea to make it possible for young, not wealthy farmers to rent farms with long-term contracts. Fair prices for farmers could only be reached by a running **partnership between retailers, farmers and processors** for price negotiations. There should be EU interventions in case of an abuse of a dominant market position.

To address market problems in the organic sector, it was claimed to pay more attention on marketing. Special support schemes for OF **marketing and processing** should be established. Marketing organizations for small organic producers were asked for. An important point was to use organic (and local) food in public procurement. **Public procurement** should therefore become an integrated part of RDP and should stimulate local demand.

Concerning **consumers**, it was stated that the demand for organic products had to be stimulated to get to a balance between supply and demand. Therefore, participants considered it very important to **involve society** in the organic development. It was said that the perception of consumers what organic implied was quite ignorant and that misunderstandings were widespread. This lack of knowledge had to be overcome. Therefore, the **dialogue** between consumers and producers should be stimulated; the organic movement should “formulate the



**message to the society**". It was considered important to educate the public on the implications and the production methods of OF. The awareness of consumers that organic products were of a special quality (also for the environment) should be increased. This was crucial to avoid bad press talk on OF, which harmed the development of OF.

### 3.1.10 Globalisation

#### Problem Areas

There were two conflicting opinions on the item of globalization: there were people advocating **protectionism** on the one side and others approving **free trade/globalization** on the other.

On the one hand, people **complained about protectionism** (e.g. by national logos). Participants said that the organic market could not be regarded isolated from the real market. Protectionism was considered detrimental to the development of OF worldwide. It meant the risk that a niche production resulted in very high costs for only a few consumers. Fair prices to EU farmers were unfair prices for developing country farmers. It was stated that free trade for all products meant that production took place where **production costs were at lowest**. A direct objection to that point was that e.g. in Switzerland, OF highly depends on dairy farming- which could be done more efficiently in other countries. But it was also argued that globalization could bring other advantages like cheaper organic food from abroad **making organic products more competitive** compared to conventional food.

On the other hand, people argued that in a globalizing world, there was a growing pressure on the organic sector: Political pressure (WTO) as well as **economical pressure** (big supermarket chains, discount trade). A decrease of prices was often linked to free trade because of a **concentration** in the retailing and food sector as a consequence of globalization. The dairy sector in Scandinavia was mentioned as an example for steadily increasing fusions and concentration of the food sector.

Concerning the "Cheap food" argument mentioned above, other participants agreed that trade liberalization by the WTO brought **cheaper food to the EU** but then argued that consumers then were even more reluctant to purchase organic products. Some people think that as the European organic sector had competitive disadvantages, the market entry of countries with low production costs (e.g. Uganda, China) could destroy the "old" organic market. People also feared a loss of consumer's confidence if there were too many imports.

At least, people said that **free trade should be limited to certain crops**. "Sensitive crops" needed to be protected so that the countries had the right to crop certain products in their country. In this context, the "export" of food production in other countries was denounced by participants.

From the point of view of exporting countries, a participant said that not enough focus was put on national markets and that the **"export-only"-production** of some countries was destabilising internal markets.

There was also a discussion about the question whether "organic food" from overseas could really be called organic. It was asked if it was a good idea to orientate OF more towards global production and if the **regional structure of**

**OF** was not an important point in its self-conception. Many people saw OF as the solution to strike against globalization.

## Policy Goals

Participants said that trade of organic products should be increased on the genuine internal EU market. It was claimed to rethink the policy on **third countries imports**: the procedure for 3<sup>rd</sup> countries should be stricter because EU farmers were losing their markets.

To face the threats caused by globalization, it was proposed to internalize the external costs of transport and to support a **short chain distribution**. It was stated that food sovereignty was important. Therefore, negotiations with supermarket chains to promote local production were useful. In this context, it was proposed to encourage **small scale** farming systems (instead of big farm units).

### 3.1.11 Competition by conventional

#### Problem Areas

On the one hand, the **power of the existing conventional systems** was denounced. A problem pointed out was that politicians often did not tell the truth about conventional production methods. An expert said that there were **strong and hidden lobbies and conspiracies against OF**. OF was not named in Rural Development Plans because of the conventional lobby. In this context, false communication and manipulation in the media, especially by the conventional system, were identified as “new weapons”.

Concerning competition in **prices**, it was stated that the external benefits of OF were not enough considered, and that conventional farming did not pay the **full costs**. It was not considered reasonable that cheap inputs, like fuel, fertilizers and pesticides improved the competitiveness of conventional farming. Concerning GMOs, it was feared that the application of **GMOs** in conventional agriculture caused higher costs in organic production.

Concerning competition in **quality**, participants said that a strong local conventional production and vital conventional **local initiatives** could be a concurrence to OF. Competition could also arise by GMOs if “healthy” GMO-products were offered. It was also mentioned that it was a big problem if evidence arose that OF did not provide improved food quality or if there was even a scientific proof of organic farming’s dangers. This meant losing a selling argument. Concerning marketing, conventional products sometimes **used misleading “green” claims**. It was a threat if consumers could make no difference between organic and conventional food. “Integrated” conventional production could be a problem, too, if consumers did not understand the difference.

Furthermore, participants named the problem of organic products often being **neither available nor accessible** to consumers.

## Policy Goals

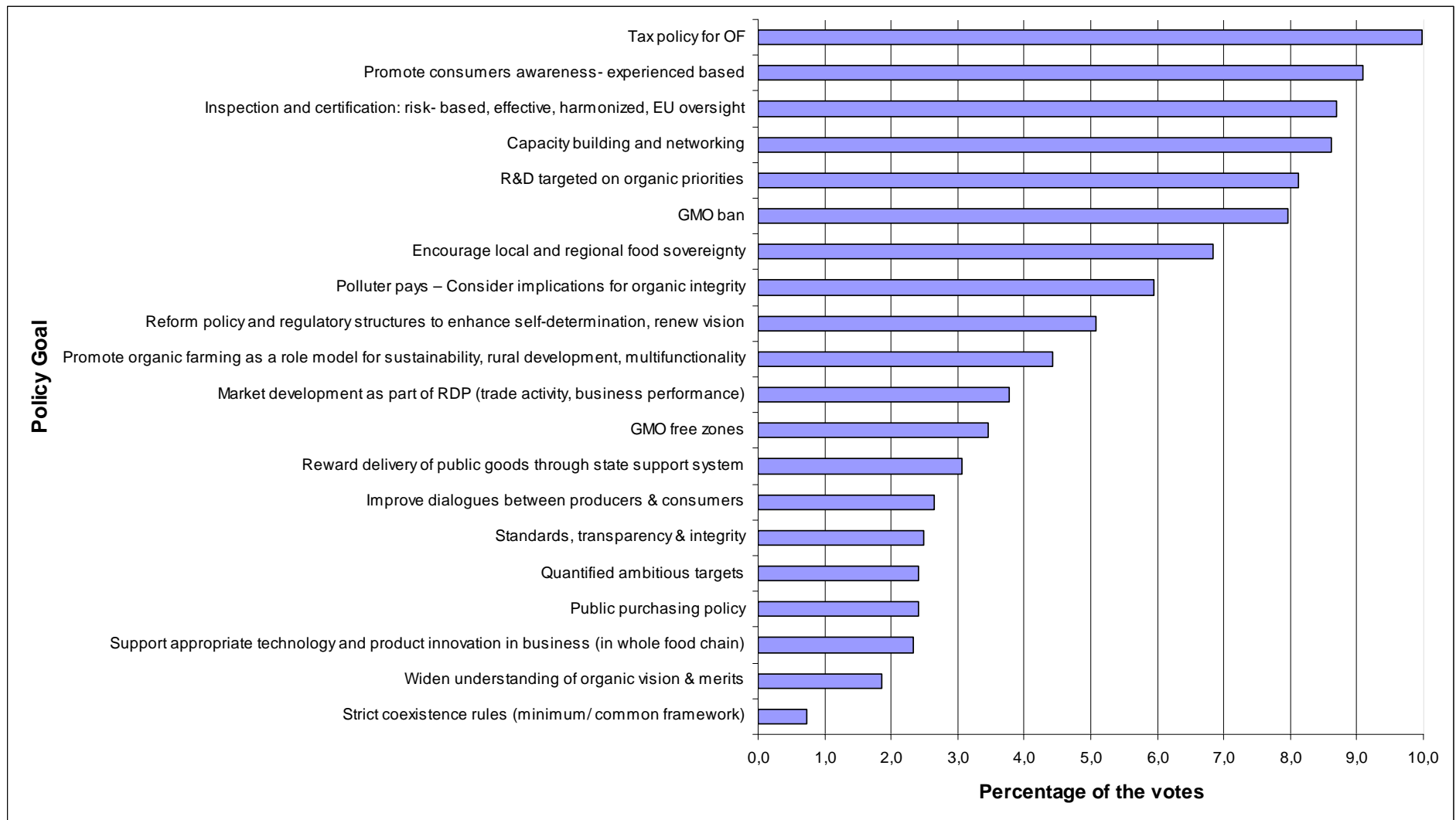
Participants said that one of the main points causing market problems for OF was that there were no “**true prices**”. Consumer prices for OF were too high compared to conventional- not all consumers were able to afford organic food. Therefore either positive externalities of OF or negative externalities of conventional farming had to be taken into account in the prices of food. In that context, participants again called for the implementation of the **polluter pays principle** in agriculture.

To overcome competition by conventional agriculture and products, it was proposed to develop OF on all levels (processing, research, technologies), namely not only by the state, but also by organic actors. New technologies and new, **innovative** products should be developed to raise organic farming’s competitiveness. It was claimed that **innovation** (in products/ processes/ marketing) should become an integrated part of RDP. Innovation in a broader context could serve to produce a traditional product. But on the other hand, innovation in convenience goods was also considered necessary. In general, **diversified products** should be organized to fit the food sector. Therefore, professionals had to be involved in product development and distribution.

To overcome the competition by conventional, it was also stated that **educational measures** as well as stricter rules for labelling products were important.

### 3.2 Prioritisation of policy goals

Against the background of the discussions led in the workshop, the “20 most important policy goals” were identified and a vote on their importance was conducted (see Figure 3-1). In Table B-1 (Appendix), you find an overview on problem areas and policy goals named by the groups and the relating topic chosen as a subchapter heading by the authors in the previous chapter. A short description of the 20 most important policy goals is offered in Table B-2.

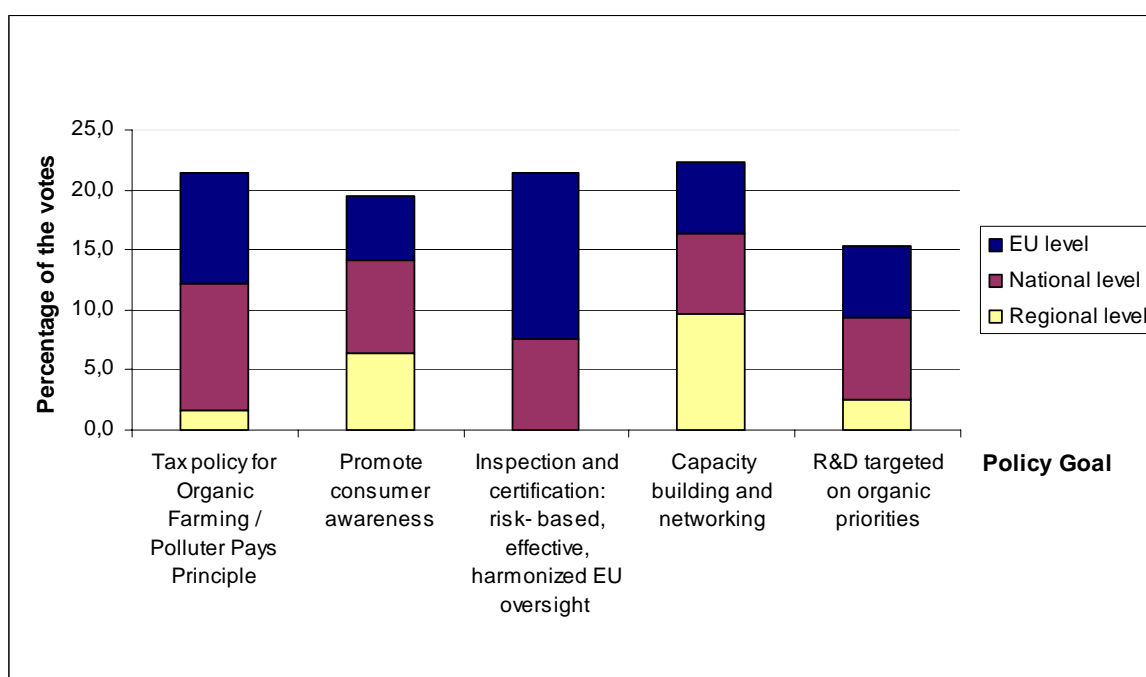


*Figure 3-1: Prioritisation of the 20 most important policy goals*

The prioritisation at administrative levels was made only for the five most voted policy goals. Although it had been discussed in all groups, “GMO” was not amongst the five most important goals- because the votes on “GMO” had been split up over three goals concerning GMOs. For the further process, the first point (“Tax policy”) was grouped together with the “Polluter Pays Principle”- because tax policy was considered to be a precision of the polluter pays principle.

In this chapter, the results of the vote on the importance of the policy goals at administrative levels as well as the discussions around the five most important goals are given and described. The voting results are shown in Figure 3-2.

*Figure 3-2: Voting results of the five most important goals and distribution of the votes on the administrative levels*



### 3.2.1 Tax policy for organic farming / polluter pays principle

There was a high **agreement** on the importance of tax policy. One participant stated that in contrast to the other policy goals, tax policy could **really affect practical change**. Taxation had very concrete consequences, e.g. for purchasers' decisions. It was said that the polluter taxation could help OF to **get rid of the dependence on subsidies** on a long term basis. The polluter pays principle should be implemented in order to internalise the external costs. If all costs were internalized, market would work much better and demand driven. But participants also emphasized that polluter taxation did not imply that present subsidies directed towards organic production were dispensable.

A contentious goal was to set a **pesticide tax on EU level**. Participants stated that there were already taxes on nitrogen and pesticides in IT and DK. But it was considered important to introduce taxes not just on inputs but also on **energy**. It was pointed out that the polluter pays principle should also be applied on the

**GMO** issue. One participant said that the polluter pays principle did not exclude organic, but **OF benefited of it**. Concerning e.g. taxes on carbon or pesticides, OF definitely had less negative impact. Participants also said that tax policy did not only mean to make the polluter pay, but also to favour environmentally friendly production systems. Consumer prices should be reduced through lower VAT taxes for organic products.

On the other hand, some people thought that tax policy for OF was not an urgent issue on the political agenda. It was stated that tax issues were outside the organic movement: it did not refer to specific taxation or other fiscal regulations for organic farmers, but it was more a global approach. Therefore, “green taxes” were **not an organic issue** par excellence. OF might benefit if a green tax reform happened but it would not perish if there was no reform.

It was stated that “tax policy” as a policy goal was very contentious, but that it would be **very rigorously opposed**. One participant said that it was **not feasible** to implement a tax reform but it was nevertheless fruitful to think about the instrument.

Concerning the **distribution of the votes on administrative levels** (Table 3-1), there was a discussion on which level this policy goal had to be addressed best. A participant strongly disagreed about putting the highest priority on the national level: it was important that the **conditions for production were the same in all EU countries**. Therefore, this issue should be operated particularly on the EU level. But it has also been argued that it might need considerable **efforts from the national level** to get to changes on EU level. As VAT was national jurisdiction, there were not many possibilities for this goal on EU level. On **local level**, it was proposed to take into consideration local money (local exchange trading schemes). The question arose how taxes on local level could work.

*Table 3-1: Tax Policy: Voting results*

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Regional level</b>	<b>National level</b>	<b>EU level</b>
Tax policy for Organic Farming / Polluter Pays Principle	<b>21,5%</b>	1,7%	10,5%	9,3%

Discussions on tax policy/ polluter pays principle led in the first phase of the workshop are described in Chapter 3.1.7. and 3.1.11.

### 3.2.2 Promote consumer awareness

It was stated that concerning the organic market, it was not only important “to push”, but particularly “to pull”. Therefore, the promotion of consumer awareness was considered an important point to ensure market development. **But accessibility and availability** of organic products was considered to be a precondition. It was stated that awareness changed habits – but only if the product was available.

Participants stated that marketing and information should be included in campaigns as a goal. Nevertheless, information campaigns and marketing campaigns had to be differentiated: **Creating awareness was different from**

**a market campaign.** However it was possible to increase the sales of organic foods by increasing awareness. Participants said that it was important to make consumers aware that they did have a choice in buying food and that organic food was very **diversified**. If organic food was included in the conventional market, the consumer would have a real choice to choose. It was criticized that it was forbidden to show the “real” advantages of OF on labels (only the “quality” aspect was allowed).

There were quite **different perceptions of the distribution** on the administrative levels (Table 3-2): One participant asked why the EU level was not considered to be very important but others wondered why there was still so much money for EU level.

On the one hand, it was said that EU wide campaigns were important. On the other hand, it was stated that the countries themselves, in their national campaigns, decided on the campaign’s topics. National activity should reflect **national and regional sensibility**. As an example, in ES and IT, animal welfare was not a theme and thus not worth being picked out as a central theme for a campaign. Therefore, the focus on promoting activities should be national/ regional, not EU-wide, even if the funding came from the EU. It was stated that in many cases (logos etc.) it might be good to have a **European funding, and a regional spending**.

A participant said that promoting consumer awareness should also be related to **labelling at EU level**. It was important that a logo not only gained recognition but also increased the sale of organic products. Participants criticized that practices in labelling were very different in the member states, e.g. milk was named “Organic milk” (DK) or “Milk produced from organic farming” (I). One participant said there would be a **translation problem** (“organic” and “biological”). It was stated that the **EU logo** could be used for pushing the whole sector – especially in the new EU member states. But there was some disagreement on the usefulness of the European logo. It was asked whether there was a linkage between the prominence of the EU logo and the growing of organic markets.

*Table 3-2: Promote consumers awareness: Voting results*

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Regional level</b>	<b>National level</b>	<b>EU level</b>
Promote consumer awareness	<b>19,5%</b>	6,4%	7,7%	5,3%

Discussions on promoting consumers awareness led in the first phase of the workshop are described in Chapter 3.1.8.

### 3.2.3 Inspection& certification: risk- based, effective, harmonized EU oversight

There was some disagreement about the **formulation** of that policy goal: it was said that it was not clear enough to formulate implementable policies thereof.

Concerning the distribution on the administrative levels (Table 3-3), it was discussed whether too much emphasis has been put to the EU-level. Participants said that it was right to harmonize the **inspection task** in the EU; therefore the EU level was relevant. But it was also stated that the importance of the EU level

was overestimated. There had to be efforts on regional and on member states level. Many participants stated that inspection systems had to **act regionally and effectively**: Bureaucracy and over-regulation had to be overcome. It was said that a vote of “zero” on regional level was neither realistic nor justified. It might be due to a misunderstanding caused by linguistic and cultural differences: two people believed that a “region” meant a group of countries.

It was stated that the distribution of the votes reflected the lack of national inspection regulation and accreditation- as most people looked at the EU to resolve the issue of inspection.

*Table 3-3: Inspection&Certification: Voting results*

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Regional level</b>	<b>National level</b>	<b>EU level</b>
Inspection and certification: risk- based, effective, harmonized EU oversight	<b>21,4%</b>	0,0%	7,6%	13,8%

Discussions on inspection and certification led in the first phase of the workshop are described in Chapter 3.1.6.

### 3.2.4 Capacity building and networking

Although some people did not consider it as important, many others agreed that **capacity building was vital**. It was stated that, looking at the reports on the organic sector, capacity building & networking were considered crucial to the sector and a deficit of OF policies.

The meaning of the term of capacity building for OF was discussed: participants said that capacity building was meant in a **broader meaning** and included not only farmer groups, but also researchers, consumers, traders, environmental groups etc. Networking should not only take place among organic actors: a vertical, not only a horizontal approach was considered to be necessary. First there should be an analysis what capacity was there, and then measures for capacity building should be implemented. It was stated that for capacity building, coaching support was necessary.

One participant said that concerning capacity building, the organic sector could learn from the **environmental movement** as well as from the conventional sector. Especially networking between farmers and consumers was important.

It was stated that capacity building also meant **lobbying**: personal contact with parliamentarians and EU level politicians was crucial for OF stakeholders. OF actors had to be involved in the political processes and shift the debate in the “organic” direction. Instead of following the policy agenda, they should set the agenda and think about a long-term strategy. The goal should be to get OF into mainstream policy.

Concerning the **distribution on the administrative levels** (Table 3-4), it was stated that it was right that most emphasis should be put on **regional level**. The reasons for the high rating on regional level were discussed: it depended on how people worked within the organic movement. Networking and social dynamic



affairs were mostly taking place on regional level. Then the question arose **at what level capacity building was needed**. One participant stated that the concentration on the regional level could also show the immaturity of the sector- as it was also important to promote the sector and to build networks on the European level. It was said that in one of the National workshops, capacity building, especially the lack of an EU lobby, has already been identified as a very strong weakness.

In this context, one participant said that it was interesting that the **EU level** was still voted so high, because the “grass root level” came to mind first. It was discussed what the **fund at EU level** implied. Did it mean that capacity building at EU level was needed- or that money coming from the EU was needed for capacity building? It was stated that too little money was provided from the EU level for capacity building. It was considered especially sensible to support capacity building at EU level.

One participant said that he wondered why “Capacity building” was not voted higher. A reason could be that it was something that the organic actors themselves were supposed to do. People perhaps thought they had already done a lot in capacity building- so they wanted to focus on other goals.

*Table 3-4: Capacity building: Voting results*

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Regional level</b>	<b>National level</b>	<b>EU level</b>
Capacity building and networking	<b>22,3</b>	9,7	6,7	5,8

Discussions on capacity building led in the first phase of the workshop are described in the Chapters 3.1.3 and 3.1.7.

### 3.2.5 R&D targeted on organic priorities

It was stated that research should underpin policy changes. Participants claimed that research in the meaning of technical developments should mean “innovation” instead of classical R&D (Research and Development). This was considered not only to be linked to the public sector but also to the **private sector**.

Concerning the distribution of the votes on the administrative levels (Table 3-5), some people could not imagine what research money at **regional level** meant. Others said the regional level should be rated higher as it was more important, e.g. for private enterprises. Three people said they had misunderstood the meaning of **R&D**: they had voted for R&D and thought voting for Rural Development Programme (RDP).

*Table 3-5: R&D: Voting results*

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Regional level</b>	<b>National level</b>	<b>EU level</b>
R&D targeted on organic priorities	<b>15,3</b>	2,6	6,8	5,9

Discussions on R&D led in the first phase of the workshop are described in the Chapters 3.1.2, 3.1.7, and 3.1.11.

### 3.2.6 General issues discussed

It was criticized that the mentioned policy goals were “grey”, did not move forwards and were **not enough innovative**. The goals were only aspirations and not imperatives; they needed “more teeth” (e.g. taxes). Another objection was that there was a difference “where the money came from” and “where it was spent/ who did the work”. As an example, the EU should support consumer campaigns even if it shouldn’t organize them.

One participant said that the basic question had to be reflected: Why should organic farming be supported at all? The commission had a high priority on the surviving of rural areas and farming. But it was argued that this did not reflect the benefits of organic farming. On the other hand, the **multifunctional issue** had nevertheless been on the Fischler agenda. Organic farming now had to deliver the arguments that it could contribute to the commission’s priorities. A pre-condition for the development of Organic Farming was to ensure that agriculture is possible – if this was reached, subsequently there was space for the questions of organic farming. At the same time, participants said that efforts apart from politics were needed in **marketing and private support** of organic farming (markets/consumers).

Another question that arose in the discussion was “What can be done without money?” The question should not only be “What does the sector expect from the commission?” but also “**What can the sector do itself?**” It was stated that all the goals were focussed on requiring something from someone else. But a speech was made for **taking the initiative** –as “we are grown up”. OF actors needed to administrate and to take more responsibility for their own interest. The organic sector should take leadership in the sector and keep it. Organic actors should make sure that OF was the leading and striking force in issues of sustainability.

### 3.2.7 What points got lost?

At the end of the session of discussion around the five most important goals, it was discussed what points arising at the beginning of the workshop got lost due to the limitation on five goals.

On the one hand, the **ideal of the organic sector was mentioned**. It was stated that the question of what OF was and how “organic” could define itself got lost. The identity of OF needed to be redefined as well as the kind of policies desired. It was claimed that organic farming needed to take leadership and become a role model. At the background of the ideas of regulation of production of the 90’s, rethinking was needed. Prior to that phase, there had been **more ideology and philosophy** in OF it should be aimed at going back to this point. In this context, two different definitions were given about what policy was: 1) what the state did and 2) what the sector did.

Participants also stated that another point that was not reflected in the formulated policy goals was the problem of ensuring **credibility**. The standards were too weak and did not or not fast enough move into the right direction (e.g. conventional feed should not be used as organic feed was available). Therefore, the

development of good standards (“ideal standards”) was considered to be important. This was also seen as a question of OF integrity.

Another point mentioned was that **environmental and biodiversity goals** had not been discussed at all. The position of OF as the most environmental friendly system had not been mentioned. An explanation therefore could be that there was already enough evidence on environmental benefits.

Concerning capacity building, it was mentioned that missing capacity was a problem in the organic sector, but that there was particularly a **capacity problem in the EU commission**. In the commission, there were only 3 persons occupied with OF; this was not enough to formulate and implement a sensible policy.

**GMO** as a central point was also stated to be missing in the final list although it was essential. One participant said that GMO was a priority, but more “outside the sectors reach”. It was complained that the **rural development programmes** as a main source of money for OF were left out in the final discussion.

Another point stated to be missing was the **failure to integrate OF in all policy fields**, programs and action plans (Environment/ Sustainability, RDP, Health, Education, Procurement and many more). What also got lost in discussion was the point of **defining quantified ambitious targets**. It was stated that it was not reasonable if “bureaucrats” defined what organic was; but the definition and the goals had to come from within the sector. Targets should be fixed for all the defined policy goals.

## 4 Summary and Outlook

In February 2005, an **EU-wide workshop** with selected stakeholders has offered a platform to exchange ideas on the future of organic farming policy in the EU. The workshop is associated with two other workshops bringing together OF actors on the national level. The most important objective of the EU workshop was to define 5 major policy goals for the future implementation of organic farming policy at national level and to make proposals on the weight which should be given to each policy goal at different administrative levels. Methods that have been applied in the workshop were a lateral thinking exercise, a non-secret voting system and a budget exercise (see Chapter 2). Close personal contact of participants in this workshop should have facilitated policy learning between countries.

The workshop is part of a **larger project** with the objective to develop recommendations for improving the prospects for Organic Farming growth in EU states in view of the CAP Reform 2003 policy framework: "Identification of the dimensions of a new European Organic Farming Policy post EU-expansion" (EU-CEEOPF).

Concerning the **results of the workshop**, the most important policy goal named by the participants was the introduction of a **tax policy for Organic Farming** and the introduction of the **polluter pays principle** in agriculture respectively. It was claimed to internalize external costs, e.g. by a tax on pesticides and mineral fertilizer. On the other hand, the delivery of public goods should be rewarded, e.g. by a reduction of VAT for environmental friendly farming systems and lower taxes on organic products.

The second important policy goal named was to **promote consumers awareness**. It was considered important to develop a communication strategy on organic food and farming including public information campaigns. Especially the integrated benefits of OF (concerning health, environment, biodiversity...) should be communicated. Labeling should be clearer and harmonized.

As the third important policy goal, it was claimed that **inspection and certification should be effective and risk-based. A harmonized EU oversight** over the inspection system was considered important. Participants called for a reduction of bureaucracy and a simplification of the procedures for inspections as well as for the harmonization of the control systems.

**Capacity building and networking** was named as the fourth important policy goal. Instead of competing with each other, organic associations should co-operate and exchange ideas. A strong political lobby had to be developed. It was proposed to make national and EU support available for capacity building and to initiate governmental programs and national platforms.

The fifth important policy goal named was to **target R&D on organic priorities**. It was claimed that research on OF had to be supported. Research activities by the private sector were considered important. It was claimed that especially innovation in products and processing was needed.

Besides these five most important policy goals, many other topics have been discussed:

Concerning **GMO**, some participants called for a total ban of GMO in agriculture, others pleaded for GMO avoidance by very strict rules and the setup of GMO free zones. Strict EU-wide common coexistence legislation and strict liability rules holding the GMO users responsible for damages were considered essential.

To strengthen the OF sector's **credibility/ integrity**, it was demanded to tighten organic practices concerning sustainability, e.g. to reduce the consumption of resources. Concerning the **identity** of the organic sector, it was claimed to get out of the niche mentality and make OF a role model for agriculture. Concerning the **relation to conventional** farming, OF had to be careful not to lose leadership in sensitive areas like sustainability or food quality.

Concerning **standards**, participants pointed out that standards should be simple and clear, motivational and principle-based. The discussion reflected the difficulty to find the right balance between too idealistic and too weak standards. Some participants said organic standards were over-regulated, others felt that standards were not good enough and that there were too many national variations.

Concerning **policy**, it was called for the prioritization of OF in all political fields and for the implementation of national action plans for OF. The set of quantitative targets for OF was considered important. Many participants called for an increase in agri-environmental programs. But it was also stated that direct state payments could be decreased if advice and assistance given by the state were increased.

Concerning **market**, participants claimed that marketing and processing had to be supported and that organic food had to be used in public procurement to stimulate the demand. It was discussed whether **globalization** would be a chance or a threat for OF. It was asked for a tightening of the procedures for 3<sup>rd</sup> country imports. Participants also claimed to overcome market **competition of conventional** products by the introduction of the polluter pays principle.

In the **future process of the EU-CEEOPF-project**, the abbreviated version of this report will be used as a preparation for the second series of national workshops. In the national workshops, the national implementation of the developed EU policy recommendations will be discussed in more detail. The national workshops will address the implementation of policy instruments, according to the results obtained in the EU workshop. The transmission of information from the EU workshop to national workshops facilitates policy transfer.

In the framework of the project, the results of the workshop will feed in the final report, providing policy recommendations to the Commission.

Another aim of the workshop was to facilitate the meeting of stakeholders with very different backgrounds from very different countries. An exchange of ideas and arguments has taken place that will hopefully feed into the development of the new Rural Development Plans in the member states. Thus all participants are appealed for using the workshop's results in designing their rural development programs.

# A Participants

*Table A-1: Participants of the workshop*

Name	Organisation	Workshop Group*
<b>AT</b>		
Alois Posch	Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Economy	Y
Iris Strutzmann	ÖBV, Association of Farmers in Mountain Areas, formerly: GLOBAL2000	G
<b>CH</b>		
Otto Schmidt	FiBL; also representative of IFOAM EU and Codex Alimentarius Committee	R
Stefan Odermatt	BIO SUISSE / Swiss Association of organic farming organisations, Basel	G
Mathias Stolze	FiBL, Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (group moderator)	G
<b>CZ</b>		
Michal Pospíšil	Association of Private Farming of the Czech Republic	G
Tomáš Zídek	VÚZE, Research Institute of Agricultural Economics, Prague	R
<b>DE</b>		
Stephan Dabbert	Institute of Farm Economics, University of Hohenheim (group moderator)	B
Alexander Gerber	BÖLW, Federation of the Organic Food Industry and umbrella organisation for organic agriculture	G
Bernd Jansen	Ekonoconnect, International Centre for Organic Agriculture of Central- and Eastern Europe, Dresden	Y
Anna Maria Häring	University of Applied Sciences Eberswalde (organiser)	
Angela Hau	Institute of Agricultural Economics and Social Sciences in the Tropics, Universität Hohenheim (assistant organiser)	
Christian Eichert	Institute of Farm Economics, University of Hohenheim (assistant organiser)	
Corinna Zerger	Institute of Farm Economics, University of Hohenheim (organiser)	
<b>DK</b>		
Paul Holmbeck	Danish Organic Service Centre	Y
Anders Klöcker	The Organic Food Council and Directorate for Food, Fisheries and Agro Business	B
Johannes Michelsen	Dept. of Political Science and Public Management, University of Southern Denmark	B
<b>EE</b>		
Merit Mikk	Centre for Ecological Engineering	G
Airi Vetemaa	Estonian Organic Farming Foundation	B
Aivar Kallar	Saaremaa Farmers Union & Estonian Biodynamic Association	R
<b>HU</b>		
Eva Ács	Kishantosi Rural Development Public Benefit Company	Y
Matthew Hayes	Open Garden Foundation	B

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	
<b>IT</b>		
Andrea Ferrante	AIAB (Associazione Italiana Agricoltura Biologica) – Italian Organic Farming Association	B
Paolo Carnemolla	FIAO (Federazione Italiana Agricoltura Organica) – Italian federation of organic agriculture	G
Roberto Pinton	Consortium (Consorzio Biologico per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile) -Organic consortium for sustainable development	Y
Raffaele Zanolli	Polytechnic University of Marche (group moderator)	R
Daniela Vairo	Polytechnic University of Marche (organiser)	
<b>PL</b>		
Mieczyslaw Babalski	Producers Organisation EKOLAND	Y
Jozef Tyburski	Translator/researcher/organic farmer	Y
<b>SI</b>		
Martina Bavec	University of Maribor, Faculty of Agriculture	Y
Anamarija Slabe	Institute for Sustainable Development	R
Marjana Peterman	Slovenian Consumer Association	Y
<b>UK</b>		
Sue Fowler	Organic Centre Wales	G
Robert Duxbury	True Food Values	R
Ian Alexander	English Nature	R
Christopher Stopes	Facilitator	Y
Nicolas Lampkin	University of Wales Aberystwyth (group moderator)	G
<b>EU level organisations</b>		
Isabelle Peutz	DG Agriculture	R
Hermann van Boxem	DG Agriculture	R
Andre Kolodziejek	DG Agriculture	
Christiane Alibert	Article 14 Committee	R
Ms Visi Garcia	CELCAA (European Liaison Committee for the Agri-Food Trade)	R
Ms Kathrin Renner	CELCAA (European Liaison Committee for the Agri-Food Trade)	R
Ms Pina Eramo	COPA	R
Mr Johannes Nebel	COPA	G
Mr Per Baumann	EUROCOOP (European Community of Consumer Cooperatives)	B
Mr Marco Schlüter	IFOAM EU group	R
Martin Konecny	Friends of the Earth Europe	B
Martien Lankester	Avalon Foundation	G
Mr Otto Schmid	Codex Alimentarius Committee (see also Switzerland)	
Mr Francis Blake	Standing committee on Organic Farming	

**\*B= Blue group, G= Green group, R= Red group, Y= Yellow group**

## B Synopsis of the groups' results

*Table B-1: Problem areas and policy goals: Synopsis of the group's results*

<b>Problem Areas</b>	<b>Policy Goals</b>	<b>Topic*</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GMO contamination</li> <li>• GMO coexistence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GMO ban</li> <li>• GMO free zones</li> <li>• Strict coexistence rules (minimum/ common framework)</li> </ul>	<b>GMO</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure of integrity of OF</li> <li>• Safety and integrity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• R&amp;D targeted on organic priorities</li> <li>• Standards, transparency and integrity</li> <li>• Inspection and Certification: risk-based, effective, harmonized, EU oversight</li> </ul>	<b>Credibility/ Integrity</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weakness of self-organisation</li> <li>• Internal conflicts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building and networking</li> </ul>	<b>Self-Organisation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identity</li> <li>• How does the organic sector perceive itself?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widen understanding of organic vision &amp; merits</li> <li>• Promote OF as a role model for sustainability, rural development, multifunctionality</li> </ul>	<b>Identity/ Relation to conventional farming</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unbalanced standards</li> <li>• Regulation</li> <li>• Overregulation EU</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards, transparency and integrity</li> </ul>	<b>Standards</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unbalanced inspection and certification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspection and Certification: risk-based, effective, harmonized, EU oversight</li> </ul>	<b>Inspection/ Certification</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inappropriate Policy</li> <li>• Lack of organic policy</li> <li>• Policy failure: Wrong organic policy</li> <li>• External institutional pressures</li> <li>• Diminishing political support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantified ambitious targets</li> <li>• Reform policy and regulatory structures to enhance self-determination, renew vision</li> <li>• Public purchasing policy</li> <li>• R&amp;D targeted on organic priorities</li> <li>• Tax policy for OF</li> <li>• Reward delivery of public goods through state support system</li> <li>• Polluter pays- consider implications for organic integrity</li> <li>• Capacity building and networking</li> </ul>	<b>Policy</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of communication</li> <li>• Lack of knowledge by consumers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote consumer's awareness- experience based</li> <li>• Improve dialogue between producers &amp; consumers</li> <li>• Widen understanding of organic vision &amp; merits</li> </ul>	<b>Communication</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stagnation and destabilisation of the organic market</li> <li>• Financial pressure on farmers</li> <li>• Address consumers demand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market development as part of RDP (trade activity, business performance)</li> </ul>	<b>Market: General market problems</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Globalisation and economic pressure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage local and regional food sovereignty</li> </ul>	<b>Market: Globalisation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition by conventional</li> <li>• Lack of appropriate R&amp;D&amp;Techniques</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support appropriate technology and product innovation in business (in whole food chain)</li> </ul>	<b>Market: Competition by conventional</b>

\* Topical area used by authors for description (=headings)



*Table B-2: 20 priority policy goals: descriptions*

Priority	Policy Goal	Description
1	Tax policy for OF	"Green Taxes" should be imposed on inputs like fuel, fertilizers, and pesticides. At the same time, taxes for organic farming techniques and organic products should be decreased or even disposed (e.g. VAT).
2	Promote consumers awareness- experienced based	Public information on OF must be intensified. Especially the integrated benefits of OF (concerning health, environment, biodiversity...) have to be communicated. Personal experiences of consumers with OF have to be enabled.
3	Inspection and certification: risk- based, effective, harmonized, EU oversight	Risk assessment-based inspection and certification procedures should be established. The control systems and the accreditation of certifiers should be harmonised EU-wide. An effective oversight over the inspection organisations should be created.
4	Capacity building and networking	Organic associations and bodies should co-operate better and develop a strong political lobby for OF. They should also try to build "external" alliances beyond the organic sector. Governmental programs should be initiated for capacity building and networking.
5	R&D targeted on organic priorities	Research should aim at solving problems in OF. Research on OF must be supported. Research fields should e.g. be: Long term-research on the positive effects of OF on health and nature, quality research, research in support to policy, research on consumer behaviour.
6	GMO ban	As co-existence is not possible, GMO has to be completely banned in all agriculture.
7	Encourage local and regional food sovereignty	OF should become a role model for food sovereignty. Local markets and a short chain distribution must be encouraged.
8	Polluter pays – Consider implications for organic integrity	The external costs of intensive production systems have to be internalized. The causer has to pay for damages caused to the environment. As organic farming does also act as a polluter in some cases (e.g. food miles), this does also include OF.
9	Reform policy and regulatory structures to enhance self-determination, renew vision	A reevaluation of the definition of OF is needed, going along with a change of regulatory structures to reduce bureaucracy and to enhance the self-determination of the organic sector.
10	Promote organic farming as a role model for sustainability, rural development, multifunctionality	Organic stakeholders must get "out of the niche mentality" and get more ambitious. OF should be promoted as a role model for sustainable development as well as for food sovereignty and multifunctionality.
11	Market development as part of RDP (trade activity, business performance)	Special support schemes for OF marketing and processing should be established. Local producer/consumer networks as well as marketing organizations for small organic producers should be encouraged.
12	GMO free zones	GMO free regions must be implemented. At least,

		regions within the EU must be allowed to declare themselves as “GMO free zone”.
13	Reward delivery of public goods through state support system	The delivery of public goods should be rewarded with the aim of favouring environmentally friendly production systems. This could be done by public support measures.
14	Improve dialogues between producers & consumers	A dialogue between consumers and producers should be stimulated. Public information campaigns should educate the public on the implications and the production methods of OF. Direct contacts between consumers and farmers have to be enabled.
15	Standards, transparency & integrity	Regulations in OF need to be clear and of high quality and thus detailed enough, but on the other hand stay operational. If problem areas are discovered, standards have to be improved.
16	Public purchasing policy	Public procurement of organic food has to be enlarged. Organic food should be served in public buildings, schools and canteens.
17	Quantified ambitious targets	Policy has to have clear principles and state its objectives clearly. Therefore quantitative targets must be set. EU policy should define a goal for OF percentage of market share as well as for percentage of UAA.
18	Support appropriate technology and product innovation in business (in whole food chain)	New technologies for OF and new, innovative products must be developed. Processing innovation is needed. Research in the meaning of technical developments is mostly linked to the private sector.
19	Widen understanding of organic vision & merits	Organic actors should develop a European organic vision. This vision together with the integrated benefits of OF (concerning health, environment, biodiversity...) has to be communicated to the consumers.
20	Strict coexistence rules (minimum/ common framework)	To avoid GMO, strict and harmonized minimum EU-wide coexistence legislation is essential as well as EU-wide control. European legislation must guarantee zero contamination for seed and food as well as strict liability rules.

## C Evaluation

Participants were asked to evaluate the workshop by writing down positive and negative remarks on whichever aspect of their workshop experience they considered relevant. In total 25 feedback questionnaires could be analysed.

### Composition of workshop group

Nearly all participants felt positive about the composition of the workshop group. Meeting such a range of experts on the topic was considered an excellent opportunity to meet stakeholders from 11 EU countries and sector experts at the EU level. Specifically, the option to meet and discuss with people committed to organics and involved in policy making but with very diverse institutional backgrounds, e.g. research, NGO, EC was considered highly inspiring. Finally, meeting members of the Standing Committee on Organic Farming in the evening was considered an excellent networking opportunity.

The friendly attitude of all participants and the good atmosphere created by the workshop organisation was noted by nearly all participants. Similarly, the quality of group discussions was generally rated very high, expressed by terms such as stimulating, inspiring and fun, intense, in-depth, and extraordinary.

The main critique by participants on the composition of the workshop group was that not all key-stakeholders were present, e.g. the absence of representatives of some member states (specifically Spain, Greece, Portugal and France) or a weak representation of national authorities. Furthermore, input voiced by participants from New Member States was considered too little as not all participants engaged equally in the discussion. Additionally, one participant would have welcomed the representation of entrepreneurs in organic farming among the participants and involvement of the “minimal standards – profit driven” part of the organic sector. One other participant was disappointed that not all announced experts actually participated.

English language skills of participants were rated a problem by several participants. These sometimes resulted on misunderstandings. On the one hand it kept non-native English speakers from expressing their views more often and in a clearer way. On the other hand native-speakers were criticised for not taking more care in expressing themselves slowly and clearly.

One participant would have liked more information on the background against which each participant was speaking. Another participant considered the sector knowledge of some participants too weak.

Furthermore, one participant criticised other participants for chatting too much during the plenary session despite the repeated prompt notes of the facilitator.

### Organisation, Facilitation and Methods

The evaluation of the organisation and preparation of the workshop was quite overwhelming for the research and organising team, because all but one evaluating participant considered that the workshop was very well prepared and organised.

Most importantly, participants encountered a very open atmosphere and very constructive and “gentle environment” for discussion. This seems to have been due to a range of aspects related to the very good organisation, the very nice venue, a very good meeting structure, process and analysis as will be specified in the following.

On the one hand, the methodology was appreciated by most participants. They felt that the methodology served very well to produce dynamic discussions. Goals and tools were set out clearly and goals were achievable, but the methodology nevertheless provided enough flexibility in its implementation. Furthermore, the length of the workshop was considered appropriate and the results of the 1st day for 2nd day work were visualisation well according to participants.

The experimental approach to the workshop methodology chosen was highly appreciated by participants. The range of tools and methods used was considered not only inspiring but also a very effective way of reaching the objectives of the workshop, but at the same time providing enough time for participants to put across views and ideas and discuss in groups. Especially the lateral thinking exercise and the step-wise approach “threats → actions → policy → priority policies” were considered a very helpful way of structuring the discussion, facilitating communication among participants, and an effective and efficient process for a broad theme such as organic farming policy.

On the other hand, some participants felt that too many ideas got lost during the discussion as the task to constantly summarise was followed very strictly by the facilitators. Thus, one participant felt that the participants’ capacities as experts were not sufficiently exploited, resulting in a lack of analysis of the discussed topics. Similarly, one participant felt that too much time was spent on categorisation of issues (problems and goals) at the expense of more interesting discussions, but at the same time recognised that this procedure was probably necessary to achieve the final outcome.

One participant felt that the required simplification was the opposite of complexity of organic farming, another found that the methodological approach in some points lacked intellectual rigor and analysis.

The methodological tools to visualise the discussion (pin-board, putting balls and money in bags) were considered too time consuming by one participant.

One participant considered the first plenary session a poor start to the workshop because it was a re-iteration what had already been circulated in written format. However, another participant appreciated the briefness of the introductory session (e.g. only one presentation).

According to another participant the methodological tool of using “Bio Euros” for prioritising should only have been used if in reality there was money to be distributed. Two participants felt that the methodology of the second day, especially the budget exercise and the following group discussion were redundant and thus resulted in wrong voting results.

To one participant it was not clear if the goals were primarily goals for public policy or for sector policy. Finally, two participants would have appreciated a discussion on the policy instruments needed to reach the discussed and prioritised policy goals. One participant would have welcomed a stronger link of the discussion to the Rural Development Regulation. Two participants demanded more precise definitions of tasks and terms: e.g. “policy goals” as opposed to

policies or the definition of R&D (Research and Development) as opposed to RDP (Rural Development Programmes), or a more in-depth discussion of the terms policy strategy, policy objective and policy goal.

The **venue** was considered very nice and excellent in providing a pleasant working atmosphere. However, although the food was considered good, organic food and beverages would have been preferable.

A few **technical** issues were criticised: A microphone would have facilitated understanding in the plenary sessions and more detailed travel information to the venue (e.g. train or bus number) would have been nice.

## Results

Several participants not only felt inspired for their work at the national level but also considered the results very valuable for the discussion in the upcoming national workshops.

Other participants would have liked to discuss the consequences of the results achieved in this workshop by discussing strategies and concrete action points for putting policy goals into action. In this context, one participant felt that the presentation on recent developments of the CAP and RDP would have better served as a framework for further action if they had been presented at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> day. However, it was also recognised that this might have constrained the discussion.

One participant was concerned that the output was too imprecise and did not reflect the most energetic discussions (e.g. globalisation issue, local organic food sovereignty, energy-resource input of farming systems). Similarly, another participant criticised that part of the discussion focussed on re-setting the goals of the organic movement.

One participant felt that the small group discussions served well to catch many contradictory statements. If the report were to clearly present them, it would facilitate the further development of organic farming policy.

One participant was concerned to show farmers the workshop documentation (quite theoretical and “nebulous”), although he recognised that the workshop results were not aimed at farmers at this stage of the research process.

One participant had doubts about the usability of workshop results by the European Commission.

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