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PRESS RELEASE: Organic movement at the helm of two Civil Dialogue Groups

BRUSSELS, 16 OCTOBER 2019 – Yesterday, IFOAM EU President Jan Plagge was re-elected as Chair of the Civil Dialogue Group on the Common Agricultural Policy. Today, IFOAM EU Vice-President Marian Blom was elected as Chair of the Civil Dialogue Group on Organic Farming.

This election comes at a crucial time in the political arena. A newly elected European Parliament and – soon to be confirmed – European Commission will start their work. Both are intent to make Europe greener in a response to European citizens and civil society mobilization in the past months. The election of Mr Plagge and Ms Blom is a recognition of organic farming's capacity to bring forward civil society's propositions to European and national policy-makers.

Jan Plagge stated: "I am honoured by the trust that farmers organisations, environmental NGOs and many other stakeholders in food and farming have put in me to hold a constructive dialogue among all representatives of society to get a new Common Agricultural Policy which delivers more performance for public goods. Organic farming is a successful way to protect biodiversity, to make agriculture part of the solution for the climate and to improve farmers' livelihoods. I am convinced that organic farming can be an important bridge for transforming food and farming systems with a powerful contribution to the European Green Deal and to the upcoming "farm to fork" strategy."

As Marian Blom puts it: “I am honoured that the organic stakeholders have trust in me and IFOAM EU. As a chair I want to improve the dialogue between the stakeholders that have an interest in organic food and farming and the European Commission. I truly think there should be more dialogue in a Civil Dialogue Group, and the development of a new European Organic Action Plan will be a great opportunity to implement a bottom-up and inclusive process through the Civil Dialogue Groups.”

Background information

Jan Plagge (DE) is IFOAM EU President of the Board. He is also President of Bioland e.V. and has many years of experience developing the organic sector. Jan has a background as an organic farmer and an organic farm advisor.

Marian Blom (NL) is IFOAM EU Vice President of the Board. She is also Knowledge & Innovation Project Leader at Bionext.

Civil Dialogue Groups consist of European-level non-governmental organisations. Civil Dialogue Groups hold regular dialogues on all matters relating to the Common Agricultural Policy and its implementation, exchange on good practices, assist the European Commission and advise on policy.