

Popular scientific result summary for project funded by Ekhagastiftelsen

Popular scientific result summary is to be submitted by e-mail within 3 months of project end.

Application number:	2017-19
Project title:	"Healthier food from the ground up: Rewarding farmers for public goods provision"
Receiver of grant (name, address):	IFOAM EU, Rue du Commerce 124, 1000 Bruxelles, Belgium
Contact / project manager:	Joanna Wierzbicka
Project start (yyyy-mm-dd):	2017-12-01
Project end (yyyy-mm-dd):	2019-11-30
By Ekhagastiftelsen granted sum:	780 000 SEK

Result summary: (897 words)

This project laid on the premise that the current payment model put in place by the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) does not reward farmers for the services and goods they produce for the community, as an indirect effect of the food production processes. Farmers deliver environmental and socio-economic goods beyond food production, which are beneficial to the society and contribute to better health. However, nowadays they must respond to unprecedented challenges in terms of environmental degradation, more common extreme climate events, increase of rural depopulation and a stagnation in wages that goes back decades.

Current CAP with its large budget has big potential to transform farming, however it had several negative effects including land concentration, factory farming, monocultures, high dependence on inputs and degradation of water and soil. The ongoing reform of the CAP for the period after 2020, represents an occasion to seize in order to improve the environmental performance of the policy and maximise the provision of environmental benefits in Europe.

This project stemmed from the hypothesis that to ensure the implementation of a remuneration system for farmers delivering public goods, it is necessary to prove that it is measurable at the farm level. Therefore, it was necessary to develop an efficient policy framework that can monitor public goods provided by farmers and prove that their efforts have an impact on the environmental level but also on the socio-economic level, valued as beneficial to the society.

Therefore, the purpose of the project was to conduct research to structure an effective, encompassing and straight forward payment model that could be employed in by policy-makers in the next CAP to reward public goods delivery. The aim pursued by the International Federation of the Organic Movement (IFOAM-EU Group) is to convert this system, by calling on policymakers to use public money to reward farmers for providing public goods for all, while mainstreaming IFOAM principles for organic farming.

The project was divided in two work packages (WP): the first aimed to develop a concept on how to use public money efficiently for delivering public goods and to provide concrete tools, backed by scientific evidence, to implement this concept in the new Green Architecture of the CAP. The second WP foresaw the dissemination of research findings and the realisation of advocacy work, towards European and national policy-makers, for realizing the implementation of targeted measures in the next 2021-27 CAP programming period, in line with the above-mentioned concept.

Before launching this project, IFOAM EU and Research Institute for Organic Agriculture (FIBL) developed a concept note to evaluate existing sustainability assessment tools that could be used to realise a payment model that rewards farmers for delivering public goods. The research findings were embedded in a report, written within the present project, called “Towards a new public goods payment model for remunerating farmers under the CAP Post-2020”.

Furthermore, IFOAM EU, FIBL and the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) conducted a research that resulted in a report called “**CAP 2021-27: Using the eco-scheme to maximise environmental and climate benefits**” that explores inter alia the extent to which the new eco-schemes can be designed to ensure greater environmental and climate ambition and how they can be tailored towards specific environmental and climate needs, as well as its funding dimension. It showed that a different payment model for farmers could be integrated in the next CAP 2021-2027, improving its efficiency in achieving policy goals with respect to environmental, social and economic sustainability.

Additional demands emerged along with the advancement of the research on public goods. Therefore, IFOAM EU decided to engage in the development of a guide for Member States on how to implement effectively deliver public goods in the CAP, through the newly proposed instrument of the *eco-schemes*, potentially a significant innovation in the CAP’s new Green Architecture, and a report on the environmental benefits that can be provided by this tool.

The outcomes of the studies were disseminated among policy-makers, researchers and organic stakeholders through several public events. The results served as evidence for the advocacy work of IFOAM EU, carried out in coherence with the *internal Communication and Advocacy Strategy for the CAP revision*, named *Ensuring Public Money for Public Goods*, and aimed at rallying support for a more ambitious CAP that matches more closely with the organic movement’s vision and the public goods payment model.

The advocacy work was successful in influencing the new CAP reform from the initial phases. The *Commission proposal* published in 2018, contained the outline of several recommendations emerged from IFOAM EU research and innovations requested by the organic movement. Moreover, the “New Green Deal” published by the European Commission includes a number of actions to undertake to fight climate and environmental challenges. Organic farming has been included as sector who can contribute to the achievement of these goals.

- Scientific publications created by the project:

- Meredith, S. and Hart, K. (2019), “CAP 2021-27: Using the eco-scheme to maximise environmental and climate benefits”, report for IFOAM EU by IEEP.
- Stolze M. et al. (2019) “Eco-schemes in the New CAP : A Guide for Managing Authorities on the use of Eco-schemes in their 2021-27 CAP Strategic Plans”.

- Other non-scientific publications:

- *Position Paper* - Towards a post-2020 CAP that supports farmers and delivers public goods to Europeans, IFOAM EU, October 2018.
- *Communication and Advocacy Strategy* - Ensuring Public Money for Public Goods, IFOAM EU, August 2018.