

Ekhagastifelsen Yearly report (2017-2018)

1. Identifying project

Application number: 2017-19

Project title: "Healthier food from the ground up: Rewarding farmers for public goods provision"

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2. Popular scientific result summary (900 words)

Required elements for reporting: Background and aims of project; Theory and method; Results from the project; Conclusion; list of publications

a. Background and aims

Farmers are facing challenges at unprecedented scale in term of environmental degradation (water and soil), extreme climate events becoming more common, rural depopulation and a stagnation in wages that goes back decades. Although the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) with its large budget has big potential to transform farming - and to an extent it has large land coverage and keeps farmers farming -, the policy has had several negative effects including land concentration, factory farming, monocultures, high dependence on inputs and degradation of water and soil.

In this challenging context, IFOAM EU calls on policy-makers to use public money to reward farmers for providing public goods for all. Farmers should not only be paid for the food they make, but also for maintaining in good condition our water, air and soil, as well as by strengthening rural communities. In this shift, it is essential to structure a system around performance, allowing farmers to do more voluntarily on several interlinked objectives.

In order to realise this vision for a better and more targeted CAP that support environmental protection, IFOAM EU works towards fulfilling the aims of the two work packages of this project:

- WP1 Aim – Develop, together with research institutes a concept on how to use public money efficiently for delivering public goods (PG), along with a proposal for payment models and sustainability tools, to have an evidence-backed document for advocacy work.
- WP2 Aim - Advocate for implementation of targeted measures, in line with the above mentioned concept, in next 2021-27 CAP programming period.

b. Theory and method

Work package 1:

WP1 will provide the knowledge basis on how to integrate existing payment models and sustainable farming practices within the existing CAP structure. This will build upon IFOAM EU's 2017 long-term position¹ on CAP.

A common research of IFOAM EU and experts from the research institute FiBL has provided a report entitled: "Towards a new public goods payment model for remunerating farmers under the CAP Post-2020"². By providing qualitative findings through expert interviews and through the analysis of payment models and sustainability tools that can facilitate the delivery of public goods in farming this report aims to present recommendations to revise the CAP.

More recent findings are reflected in an underway project that builds on the mentioned payment models report and that considers the CAP proposal of June 2018. This project intends to prepare a practical guide that EU Member States can use to design their CAP Strategic Plans (i.e. implementation at national level of future CAP programming) in a way that it maximises public goods delivery. Further qualitative data to be added in the mentioned practical guide will include consultations of national and EU experts via individual interviews within the framework of two workshops in 2019.

Together, both the report and the guide will further develop the public goods concept and how it can fit within the new CAP architecture.

Work Package 2:

Considering the researches and the IFOAM EU position regarding the CAP, an internal Advocacy Strategy was developed to reach the different environmental goals, in line with organic and agro-ecological principles. Furthermore, during 2018 and 2019, the advocacy efforts of IFOAM EU have been centred on 3 main aspects: target the EU institutions; work together with partners at European level; and mobilise membership (i.e. organic sector) to advocate at national level.

c. Information on what was done last year

Work package 1:

During 2018 the CAP report on payment models was finalised, published and disseminated among EU policy-makers. As a result of the joint effort of the experienced consortium (formed by [FiBL](#) and [IEEP](#)), a guide was developed for the attention of Member States on how CAP Strategic Plans can be designed to optimise public goods delivery. Furthermore, the first deliverable on CAP policy recommendations was finalised in late 2018, while the guide is expected to be available at the conclusion of the project in May 2019.

¹ IFOAM EU position on CAP. For more information please consult the following [link](#).

² Stolze, M., Frick, R., Brüggemann, J., Meredith, S. & Schader, C., (2017) Annex: Concept Note. *Towards a new public goods payment model for remunerating farmers under the CAP Post-2020*. IFOAM EU & FiBL, 1-21. [Link here](#).

Work package 2:

Several bilateral meetings with Commission officials (AGRI and ENVI) at different levels (Officers, Heads of Unit and Directors) were organised during the 1st half of 2018 to share IFOAM EU's vision of a CAP centred on public goods, backed by the study, before the publication of the proposal. Likewise, as an active member of the European Commission's Civil Dialogue Groups (CDG) on agriculture, IFOAM EU took part of the meetings of all 3 expert groups on CAP. Moreover, IFOAM EU was elected for the 1st time to chair the main CAP CDG, a duty that is carried out by IFOAM EU's president Jan Plagge.

During the 2nd half of 2018, IFOAM EU prepared, in a joint effort with its members, its position on the CAP proposals of June and drafted amendment recommendations that seek to strengthen the environmental and social aspects of the policy. Therefore, IFOAM EU position was presented to the main Groups of the European Parliament in over 20 meetings, including the key MEPs responsible for the CAP dossier (Rapporteur and shadows) as well as the secretariats of the groups in both the Agriculture and Environment committees.

Finally, IFOAM EU made some improvements regarding the coordination of CAP advocacy actions at national level through the work done with its members taking part of the Farmers Group. The idea of the strengthening the CAP advocacy work of farmers at national and local level is also to have an impact within the Council, both in terms of preparing advocacy material (e.g. position papers and amendments) as well as to encouraging them to use it within their ministries.

d. Partial results:

The Commission CAP proposal includes several key innovations that the organic movement has been regularly requesting, these include:

- the possibility to fund ambitious environmental action in the 1st pillar of the CAP (where ¾ of the budget is) under the new eco-schemes;
- stronger environmental rules under conditionality, raising the minimum baseline for all farmers;
- moving to a results-based system focused on common objectives;
- Specific indicators for organic farming which link to the common objectives.

Following the proposal, IFOAM EU has engaged with decision-makers from the European Parliament and presented 23 amendment recommendations. All IFOAM EU amendments were tabled by at least 1 MEP, and most of its key amendments (Articles 6; 13NEW, 28 and 92) were presented by MEPs of 3-4 political groups. This gives IFOAM EU recommendations a good chance of being put to vote in the Environment and Agriculture Committee in February and March of 2019.