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FINAL MINUTES

Meeting of the Civil Dialogue Organic Farming

16/11/2018

Chair: Ms Lone ANDERSEN (COGECA)

Organisations present: All Organisations were present, except BEUC, EFFAT and WWF EPO.

1. Approval of the agenda (and of the minutes of previous meeting¹)

2. Nature of the meeting

The meeting was non-public.

3. List of points discussed

1. Adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting and of the agenda

2. Election of the Chairmanship of the CDG

3. Overview from FIBL on the market situation of the organic sector in the EU

4. Revision of the organic farming legislation

- Information on the state of play of the revision process

- Information on the calendar of implementing and delegated acts

- Discussion on the main issues that delegated and implementing acts would need to solve as regards production rules and controls

5. Information on the European Action plan: follow up on the implementation of the measures

6. EGTOP activities: state of play

7. International Trade and Trade deals

¹ If not adopted by written procedure (CIRCABC)

8. Presentation of the RELACS project

9. AOB

1. Adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting and of the agenda

The Chair welcomed the participants. She proceeded to the adoption of the minutes. Then she asked the participants if they have any other business to add to the agenda. IFOAM asked to have a presentation on Brexit. FRUCOM asked to have information on Mate tea and on the guidelines for controls in Ukraine. Copa asked to have further information on the copper state of play. Then the agenda was approved.

2. Election of the Chairmanship of the CDG

The Secretariat of the Commission informed the participants about the procedure for the election of the Chairmanship of the CDG. The candidates are the following ones :

- Ms Lone ANDERSEN (COGECA) for a 2nd mandate as Chair
- Ms Marian BLOM (IFOAM EU) for a 1st mandate as Vice-Chair and
- Mr Norbert KOLB (SACAR) for a 2nd mandate as Vice-Chair

They were all elected at unanimity.

3. Overview from FIBL on the market situation of the organic sector in the EU

A representative from FIBL gave a presentation on the latest trends in the organic market in the European Union. The presentation is available at DG AGRI's website. Over the last 10 years the retail sales grew faster than the EU organic area. In terms of organic retail sales value, Germany has the biggest market followed by France. In terms of organic market shares, Denmark is the first country followed by Switzerland. Denmark's Organic Action Plan, which has become a popular policy planning tool in European countries over the last decade, received the Future Policy Award 2018 in Silver. Almost 80 percent of Danes purchase organic food and today the country has the highest organic market share in the world (13 percent).

In terms of current trends, in many countries general retailers are showing the strongest growth among organic retail marketing channels. Collaborations between retailers/discounters are becoming more frequent, for example, in Germany, there is a collaboration between Lidl and Bioland and between Real and Demeter. A differentiation of organic product lines within supermarket chains is currently taking place. At the same time, catering channels are gaining importance.

In conclusion, the organic market continues to grow at a fast pace in Europe and in the EU. Currently production is growing faster than in the past, thus the potential is there to meet the demand of the ever growing market. In most countries, general retailers are the most important marketing channel. In those countries, where they have not been dominant so far, general retailers are gaining ground. In some countries the supermarkets are beginning to offer several organic product lines to meet the needs of a broadening

consumer base. Partnerships between producer/sector organisations and supermarkets are essential in order to develop the sector as a whole. Further marketing channels (out of home consumption) apart from retailing need to be developed – Denmark is a good example. More and better data are needed.

FEFANA asked a question about the way FIBL collected the data and if it was done in cooperation with the Commission.

FIBL answered that their data was taken from EUROSTAT and from their networks at national level.

The COM said that regarding imports there will be no change of customs duties to include “organic codes”, but thanks to the electronic certificates by early next year we will be able to have data.

Eurocommerce said that on one side having an additional logo is good to differentiate the products and on the other side too many logo can discredit the products.

Fair Trade said that the fair trade logo is an example of a very successful logo.

Copa said that having more retailers involved in the organic sector, we must be very careful that they do not push to pay less to organic farmers.

4. Revision of the organic farming legislation

- **Information on the state of play of the revision process**
- **Information on the calendar of implementing and delegated acts**
- **Discussion on the main issues that delegated and implementing acts would need to solve as regards production rules and controls**

The Commission gave a presentation on the state of play of the secondary legislation. On production rules, further clarifications were provided on the issues that have been discussed by Member States and that will be included in the draft Regulations to be presented in January-February 2019. Further clarification was also provided on the issues that were discussed but that will not be included in the draft Regulations to be presented in January-February 2019, but at a later stage.

In addition, all current annexes of Regulation 889/2008 are being reviewed in order to update them and align them with horizontal rules and the organic reform. Annexes III on the minimum surface areas indoors and outdoors and other characteristics for bovine, equine, ovine, caprine and porcine animals and poultry and Annex XIIIa on aquaculture will be integrated in the implementing act on production rules to be presented in January-February 2019. Annex I on fertilizers, soil conditioners and nutrients, Annex II on pesticides and Annex VIIIa on products and substances for use or addition in organic products of the wine sector were updated in 2018. Discussions on the update of Annex IX ingredients of agricultural origin which have not been produced organically are ongoing. The objective is to have all relevant Annexes regularly updated until mid-2020 so they can be published before the first January 2021. The articles on control and trade, which shall or may be activated next year, were also presented.

Fefana asked if it was possible to have access to the working document that are discussed with member states in order to have a more transparent process. The presentation for the CDG should be made available to the participants 3 days before the meeting.

The Commission replied that they follow the usual process as regards the Committees, they informed the stakeholders in advance about the work that is done and they cannot send the draft implementing acts. They will also try to send the presentations of the CDG a few days before the meeting.

IFOAM EU said that they prepared several position papers and they are ready to make them available to all the participants. These include IFOAM's main positions on organic poultry and aquaculture juveniles.

Copa and Cogeca explained their main positions on organic poultry and as regards organic pigs. In addition, the organic sector should also be active as regards the issue of the African Swine Fever.

- A representative from EOCC gave a presentation on the new rules on verification of compliance frequency. The presentation is available on the website of DG AGRI. He concluded his presentation by saying that the challenges of the annual verification of compliance are the following ones :

- There is a need to clarify or define what means “verification of compliance”
- Extend the concept of the on-the-spot inspection according to the requirements of organic production
- Reassure stakeholders that the new regulation will not result in a situation where only 15% of all the organic operators will be subject to an on-the-spot inspection
- Convince stakeholders of the organic sector that the new regulation will reduce the number and amount of non-compliant products entering/being placed on the market
- Convince the stakeholders of the organic sector that the new regulation will result in more effective controls by applying a flexible risk assessment

Annual verification of compliance and annual on-site-inspections are cornerstones of the organic control system. Therefore EOCC requests that deviations from that frequency should be subject to prior authorization from competent authorities.

Copa indicated that they are in favour of the annual on-site inspection

IFOAM-EU asked if the verification of compliance should be every year but the on-site inspection is not annual.

EOCC replied that they have the same understanding.

IFOAM-EU mentioned that when there is no on-site inspection, it means that there is a risk assessment of a low probability of non-compliance. Control bodies have their own criteria for risk assessment, would they have to update their criteria? How can the verification of compliance be implemented without making on-site inspection ?

SACAR: said that less inspection would have a negative impact as regards media and this could lead to less consumer confidence.

The Commission reminded the participants that organic farming will be part of the Official Controls Regulation which foresees a part of risk analysis. It makes sense to spend more time on risky operators. The logic is not to be contested. The on-site inspection should remain the basic rule and then, if certain conditions are fulfilled, control bodies can decide not to do it (and justify why). The on-site inspection is not an absolute guarantee of compliance, it depends also on the quality of the control. This discussion is useful as we all have a common goal: the aim is to achieve a reliable control system.

- The representative from EOCC then gave a presentation regarding the challenges on the new rules on the groups of operators. His presentation is available on the website of DG AGRI.

IFOAM EU said that the certificate is allocated to the group. So in case of withdrawal of the certificate, it will impact all the members of the group. We have to take advantage of the experience of group certification in Third Countries on the basis of DG SANTE reports.

Fair Trade said that it has been a challenge for control bodies to inspect groups of up to 3000 members in third countries. They have in addition 20 years of experience therefore it is worth to learn from their experience.

5. Information on the European Action plan: follow up on the implementation of the measures

The representative from the Commission gave a presentation focusing on the action 12 that still has to be fully implemented. Indeed, the electronic certificate for internal market still needs to be finalised. The work will mainly take place during the first half of 2019.

On Copper: currently, there is one compromise proposal on copper compound which will be voted on November 27 by the Committee of DG SANTE, given that its authorisation will expire on 2019. The proposal is for an authorisation of 28 kg for 7 years with the possibility of smoothing.

Copa said that given that there are currently no alternatives for copper this issue is very difficult to deal with. In addition, copper is naturally present in nature.

6. EGTOP activities: state of play

A representative from the Commission gave a presentation on the latest activities of EGTOP.

5 EGTOP meetings took place in 2018:

- Food and wine subgroup 6-8 March
- Fertiliser subgroup 10-12 April

- Plenary 6-8 June: the reports finalised and published; further subgroups planned
- Feed and Food 17-19 October
- Plant protection products 24-26 October

There are 2 more EGTOP meetings planned

- Plenary 26-28 November: reports on plant protection products and food/feed subgroup to be finalised; further subgroups planned
- Cleaning and disinfectants
- Further information on the update of Regulation 889/2008 that was based on the EGTOP reports was also provided.

7. International Trade and Trade deals

A representative from the Commission gave further information on the state of play of the international trade deals.

- The negotiation with Mexico are ongoing. The Commission will go there in December.
- On the negotiations with Colombia, the Commission will go there beginning of next year.
- On equivalent trade on organic: more informal contact with other third countries are needed
- On USA, the next annual meeting on the context of recognition is foreseen beginning of December 2019.
- In June the Commission was in the USA to explain to them the new regulation.

IFOAM-EU said that as regards trade agreement, it will be useful to understand the rules when making the assessment for equivalence. In addition, a detailed tool developed by IFOAM can be a good support for establishing these equivalence standards.

8. Presentation of the RELACS project

A representative from IFOAM gave a presentation on the RELACS project that is available on the website of DG AGRI.

The Commission asked about the state of play of the substitution of copper. IFOAM explained that it is larynx extract and Milk extract and a couple of other products.

IFOAM referred to the project expected activity to revise norms for vitamin nutrition in livestock. A debate took place on alternatives sources of vitamin B2 and when reference was made to feedstuff, FEFANA pointed out that the project should also consider the necessary investments for EU premarket approval of new product. FEFANA also mentioned that the circumstance where the entire livestock 'monogastric' sector relies on one only possible feed supply of vitamin B2 (as it was in the recent past) should be prevented in the future.

9. AOB:

- As regards the guidelines for Ukraine, during the next COP Meeting on 28-29 November, it will be decided to extend these guidelines for the year 2019 with some small changes.
- A Commission representative explained the state of play on Brexit. On Sunday 25 November, there will be an extra EU summit. All possible outcomes are open including no agreement. The Commission has issued "preparedness" notices as well as a recent preparedness Communication to alert stakeholders to a 'no deal' scenario.

SACAR asked about the consequences on trade for organic products in case of no deal

The Commission replied that in case of no deal, the UK will be considered as third country and this implies to recognize a new control body but this can be done quite swiftly. In case of soft Brexit, the transitional period will allow time to negotiate an equivalence agreement with the UK. In case of hard Brexit, it still to be seen how UK will recognize EU Control bodies.

4. Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

5. Next steps

The Chair made a proposal for the next CDG to dedicate half of the time on climate issues, EU environmental foot-printing initiatives and related consumer expectations.

EOCC replied that although EOCC shares these concerns, EOCC reminds that control rules will be high in the agenda for the next meeting, therefore we have to be sure to have enough time to discuss it. Moreover, some other CDG like the one on Environment are more relevant to this issue.

The Chair replied that the CDG will also mainly focus on the ongoing work on the implementing and delegated acts.

6. Next meeting

The date of the next meeting still has to be decided.

7. List of participants - Annex

Disclaimer

"The opinions expressed in this report represent the point of view of the meeting participants from agriculturally related NGOs at community level. These opinions cannot, under any circumstances, be attributed to the European Commission. Neither the European Commission nor any person acting on behalf of the Commission is responsible for the use which might be made of the here above information."

List of participants– Minutes
Civil Dialogue Group Organic Farming
 Date: 16/11/2018

MEMBER ORGANISATION	NAME	FIRST NAME
Association des régions européennes des produits d'origine (AREPO)	SCAGLIONI	Giulia
Association des régions européennes des produits d'origine (AREPO)	SERRANO-PADIAL	Eduardo
EU Association of Specialty Feed Ingredients and their Mixtures (FEFANA)	CAPODIECI	Giuseppe Luca
Euro Coop - European Community of Consumer Co-operatives (EUROCOOP)	ZILLI	Rosita
Eurogroup for Animals	PORTA	Francesca
European Agroforestry Federation (EURAF)	WATTÉ	Jeroen
European Coordination Via Campesina (ECVC)	GUILLAUME	Emilie
European Council of Young farmers (CEJA)	DE FALCO	Osvaldo
European Council of Young farmers (CEJA)	BINDER	Helene
European Council of Young farmers (CEJA)	SPIJKERMAN	Auke
European Council of Young farmers (CEJA)	FÉNIX	Tomáš Ignác
European Crop Protection Association (ECPA)	OGER	Laurent
European Environmental Bureau (EEB)	KIKOU	Olga
European Environmental Bureau (EEB)	SLABE	Anamarija
European Landowners' Organization asbl (ELO asbl)	ROCHA	Ana
European Landowners' Organization asbl (ELO asbl)	MADEIRAa	João
European Liaison Committee for Agriculture and agri-food trade (CELCAA)	BUONANNO	Matilde
European Organic Certifiers Council (EOCC)	QUINTIN	Aurelie
European Organic Certifiers Council (EOCC)	NIZET	Tom
European Rural Poultry Association (ERPA)	GUYOT	Marie

European agri-cooperatives (COGECA)	ANDERSEN	Lone
European agri-cooperatives (COGECA)	HEGENBARTH	Lorna
European agri-cooperatives (COGECA)	NASIRIPOUR	Negin
European agri-cooperatives (COGECA)	BENITES	Cynthia
European agri-cooperatives (COGECA)	LIONRENTAS	Almantas
European farmers (COPA)	VAN ZELDEREN	Kees
European farmers (COPA)	NEUHOFER	Theresia
European farmers (COPA)	SACCARDO	Annalisa
European farmers (COPA)	DIENEL	Wolfram
Fair Trade Advocacy Office (FTAO)	SUMA	Nabilai
FoodDrinkEurope (FoodDrinkEurope)	IBELLI	Luca
FoodDrinkEurope (FoodDrinkEurope)	BLAKE	Melanie
International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements EU Regional Group (IFOAM EU Group)	ATKINSON	Christopher
International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements EU Regional Group (IFOAM EU Group)	BLOM	Marian
International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements EU Regional Group (IFOAM EU Group)	BUSACCA	Emanuele
International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements EU Regional Group (IFOAM EU Group)	REYNAUD	Michel
Pesticide Action Network Europe (PAN Europe)	CHRISTENSEN	Henriette
Secrétariat des Associations du Commerce Agricole Réunies (SACAR)	Dr. KOLB	Norbert
Secrétariat des Associations du Commerce Agricole Réunies (SACAR)	KULLIK	Martin
Secrétariat des Associations du Commerce Agricole Réunies (SACAR)	VORSS	Romans
Helga Willer	WILLER	Helga
Bram Moeskops	MOESKOPS	Bram
Total:		42