



1 | **On**  
2 | **A different vision of CAP: building food and farming systems that are fair, socially just,**  
3 | **environmentally aware, healthy and caring across Europe and the world**  
4 |

5 | With 40% of the EU budget allocated to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), decisions made as  
6 | to which farming systems and practices to promote, directly shape the EU's food systems. The  
7 | way we conduct agriculture has a major impact on both society and the environment within and  
8 | outside the European Union. The CAP policy has been driven mainly by a production paradigm,  
9 | corresponding to exigencies inherited from post-World War II, but totally obsolete today. This is  
10 | why we urge that a different vision of CAP is adopted.

11 | In our vision, the key challenges for future food policy include:

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- 13 | - Mitigating and adapting to climate change;
- 14 | - Guaranteeing coherence with Sustainable Development Goals;
- 15 | - Guaranteeing the sustainable use of natural resources;
- 16 | - Avoid negative impacts on water, soil and air;
- 17 | - Cutting chemical inputs like pesticides and fertilisers as well as antibiotics;
- 18 | - Tackling agriculture's contribution to biodiversity loss, acid rain and eutrophication;
- 19 | - Ensuring animal welfare and reducing meat consumption and the associated resource use,  
20 | health and climate effects;
- 21 | - Ensuring land is available and affordable for small farmers;
- 22 | - Establishing lively rural environments;
- 23 | - Ensuring fair incomes for farmers and reducing inequalities between member states and  
24 | regions;
- 25 | - Supporting public health through adequate nutritious quality food for all;
- 26 | - Avoiding food waste;
- 27 | - Guaranteeing food sovereignty;
- 28 | - Supporting a healthy European primary sector;
- 29 |

30 | **4.** Agriculture must not become polarised by dividing land into perceived productive and  
31 | unproductive areas. Instead, we must maintain a cohesive food system that redresses imbalances  
32 | and distributes productivity outside the most-favoured areas.  
33 |

34 | Under the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework, €408.31 billion is earmarked for the CAP,  
35 | the largest part of which is allocated to the first pillar, to directly support farmer incomes.  
36 | Unfortunately, subsidies are granted to all farmers, whatever the nature of their activities. Less  
37 | than 30% of EU agriculture spending goes to environmental and climate actions. Investments in  
38 | sustainable-organic farming systems account for a mere 1.5%<sup>†</sup>. Because of the social destruction  
39 | it leads to and the disaster it represents as far as biodiversity is concerned, it is worrying that agro-

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<sup>†</sup> Stolze, M. et al., (2016): Organic farming and the prospects for stimulating public goods under the CAP 2014-2020. IFOAM-EU, Brussels. Available at: [www.ifoam-eu.org/sites/default/files/ifoameu\\_study\\_organic\\_farming\\_cap\\_2014\\_2020\\_final.pdf](http://www.ifoam-eu.org/sites/default/files/ifoameu_study_organic_farming_cap_2014_2020_final.pdf)



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40 | industrial farming should benefit so much from the CAP. Therefore, the budget should be  
41 | reoriented so as to benefit more organic farming and short food chains.

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43 |  
44 | The European agriculture model has a major impact on our environment: currently, European  
45 | agriculture contributes 10.35% to the EU's total greenhouse gas emissions, while 44% of total EU  
46 | water extraction is used for agriculture. Pollution from pesticides and fertilisers used in agriculture  
47 | are a major cause of poor water quality and substantial decrease of insects, such as bees, that are  
48 | responsible of pollination of our crops. Over the last 100 years, some 75% of plant genetic diversity  
49 | has been lost by abandoning multiple local varieties in favour of genetically uniform ones. Today,  
50 | 75% of the world's food production is generated from only 12 crops and five animal species. By  
51 | clearing natural habitats for intensive monoculture, Europe loses 970 million tonnes of soil every  
52 | year. The EU currently wastes around 88 million tonnes of food or 20% of total annual food  
53 | production, costing an estimated €143 billion.

54 |  
55 | European agriculture also has a major impact on our society. Due to market deregulation, farmers  
56 | are exposed to market volatility. In the EU, one in every four farms disappeared between 2003 and  
57 | 2013. This trend has been exacerbated by the CAP promoting ever-larger and more specialised  
58 | farms. Employment opportunities in the sector are declining. At the same time, 43 million EU  
59 | citizens (8.5%) could not afford a quality meal every second day in 2015. Pesticide contamination,  
60 | the large use of antibiotics in animal farming and unbalanced nutritional values result in public  
61 | health issues, and therefore additional healthcare costs for European citizens.

62 |  
63 | If Europe does not make a determined step to create a sustainable food system, the cost to the  
64 | European citizen will continue to increase. The new CAP must meet both current and future  
65 | challenges.

66 |  
67 | We demand transparent and ambitious negotiations on CAP reform, ensuring strong political  
68 | mandates and commitments for the co-legislators. The influence of agribusiness and multinational  
69 | chemical companies must be limited. Negotiations must be done in the public interest resulting in  
70 | a positive vision which is profitable for farming communities rather than a handful of private  
71 | interests. Finally, we urge Europe to retake control of its food sovereigntythe EU to sustain and  
72 | raise it's high quality food standards instead of participating in a race to the bottom that often  
73 | results from ,-endangered by free trade agreements implemented under the influence of the  
74 | neoliberal economic agenda.

75 |  
76 | Moreover, while CAP reform is needed, we think that reforming the agricultural sector without  
77 | reforming the whole food system would be ineffective. We will be unable to make a concrete shift  
78 | towards sustainable agriculture unless we widen the scope from agriculture to food systems,  
79 | which is why we support the idea of taking the debate beyond the CAP, towards creating a  
80 | 'Common Food Policy'.

81 |  
82 | Our demands for reforming the CAP are:

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- 84 | 2.1. **Updating CAP objectives:** we demand the general objective is updated. The new  
85 | CAP must guarantee good-quality sustainable, healthy and local food for all Europeans. In  
86 | the long run, the goal should be to achieve a complete agro-ecological transformation, that  
87 | includes 100% organic production, and complete-full European food sovereignty based on  
88 | import resilience and fair trade.  
89 |
- 90 | 3.2. **Change the nature of direct payments to embrace an organic and agro-ecological**  
91 | **model:** agro-ecology is the way to convert our agriculture in an environmentally and socially  
92 | responsible sector, able to face our current challenges. CAP payments must be based on  
93 | results, linking them to criteria such as providing quality jobs, improving soil and water  
94 | quality or animal welfare, boosting biodiversity. ~~Direct p~~Payments must give a clear priority  
95 | to farms applying organic and agro-ecological principles (see Annex I and II).  
96 |
- 97 | 3. **Rebalancing Pillars 1 and 2:** transfers from Pillar 2 to Pillar 1 should be prohibited, giving a  
98 | clear strategic priority to Pillar 2. Pillar 2 payments must be based on impact rather than  
99 | specific methods. Pillar 1's territoriality must be reinforced by transferring subsidies from a  
100 | hectare-based system to one that prioritises ecosystem services.  
101 | 4. ———  
102 |
- 103 | 5.4. **Making agriculture profitable:** ~~a key demand is fair, remunerative prices for farmers~~  
104 | ~~that cover farmers should be able to earn a decent income through fair and remunerative~~  
105 | ~~prices that exceed~~ production costs, ~~alongside fair retailer and supermarket contracts.~~  
106 | Farmer autonomy and input independence should be promoted. We need to mitigate  
107 | volatility through a supply management system that matches supply with EU demand. ~~A~~  
108 | ~~mandatory limitation on production must be applied to avoid crisis~~ when the market is  
109 | unbalanced. ~~We demand the status of women is reinforced and special incentives for young~~  
110 | ~~farmers. The CAP must strive to maintain as many farms as possible and provide a fair~~  
111 | ~~income to farmers and farm workers.~~ CAP must allow and support the combination of  
112 | farming with other profitable services such as the production of sustainable energy and  
113 | ecological tourism.  
114 |
- 115 | 6.5. **Shorter food chains:** local food should be given a special facilitation. Production for  
116 | local consumption should have a better direct payments margin. Legislation should help  
117 | small farmers to produce, process and sell directly.  
118 |
- 119 | 7.6. **A 'do no harm' policy:** external effects of the CAP on developing countries should  
120 | be significantly cut and monitored. European production for domestic consumption must  
121 | be favoured over exportation. Subsidies that favour exportation, even indirectly, must be  
122 | cut. Keeping CAP as an EU level policy will help negotiating import/export rules that favour  
123 | ecologically and socially responsible agriculture, actors, and societies.  
124 |
- 125 | 8.7. **Reduce EU protein dependency:** EU protein autonomy should be reinforced by  
126 | reducing the production of meat and dairy, especially in export-orientated intensive farms,  
127 | and by increasing the production of EU vegetable proteins. EU vegetable protein production  
128 | through CAP incentives must be increased. We request implementation of a protein



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- 129 | strategy that replaces imported soya, which drives land grabbing and destruction of tropical  
130 | forests and savannah, with home-grown leguminous crops as part of a longer rotation on all  
131 | arable land, stimulating local and regional feed markets. Pasture-based grazing should be  
132 | prioritised.  
133 |
- 134 | ~~9-8.~~ **Apply the precautionary principle:** apply the precautionary principle (art. 191 TFUE)  
135 | regarding chemical products used in agriculture more stringently to substances that risk  
136 | endangering human health and ecosystems; ecological taxation by abolishing reducing CAP  
137 | aid for mineral fertilisers and pesticides; and no subsidies to GMOs and animals fed with  
138 | GMOs.  
139 |
- 140 | ~~10-9.~~ **Production standards:** set more coherent production standards in terms of  
141 | sustainability, local traditions, health, safety, and animal welfare goals, aiming to close  
142 | nutrient cycles, and promote standards that favour small agro-ecological farms over  
143 | industrial farming. Member States should be allowed to compensate farmers for higher  
144 | costs due to measures that go beyond EU regulation.  
145 |
- 146 | **10. Support small farms:** protect farmers from unfair competition imposed by international  
147 | trade policy; mandatory higher payment rates for the first hectares/acres of land (according  
148 | to the national average).  
149 |
- 150 | 11. Youth access: The CAP should offer possibilities to help young and new farmers to buy land  
151 | and start a farm. A bureaucratic simplification must be applied to facilitate the generational  
152 | change in farms.  
153 |
- 154 | ~~11.~~ Gender equality: Acknowledging the women as driving force for development of innovative  
155 | activities, the new CAP should support women in rural areas by, inter alia, providing social  
156 | services and special incentives to encourage them taking part in the decision-making  
157 | process especially within the LEADER framework.  
158 |
- 159 | **12. Exercise caution with precision farming, big data and big machinery lobbies:** whilst there is  
160 | considerable scope for technologies, such as predictive models to forecast extreme  
161 | weather/pest outbreaks, to plan farm work and interventions accordingly, we must beware  
162 | of the not-so-hidden agenda of the 'innovation' and 'big data' lobbies. Development of new  
163 | big data techniques or precision agriculture must be transparent, open source and with the  
164 | participation of the farmers, to ensure farmer autonomy. Low-tech methods can be equally  
165 | or more effective, are certainly more appropriate for smaller or remote upland farms, and  
166 | engender less debt or input dependency.  
167 |
- 168 | **13. Research and training:** teaching agro-ecological practices must be mandatory in  
169 | professional agricultural training and promoted through the Farming Advisory System  
170 | (FAS). The EU should put in place a strategy to facilitate knowledge transfer via farmer-to-  
171 | farmer and through publicly funded farmer advisory systems and participatory research.  
172 | Using European Innovation Partnerships, which bring together researchers, farmers and



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- 173 other practitioners, test and spread agro-ecological practices via a participatory,  
174 community-based approach.  
175
- 176 **14. Finance the transition:** farmers who decide to move towards an agro-ecological transition  
177 should be ~~eligible to get easy terms on EU loans~~ encouraged and supported to do so  
178 ~~financially~~. ~~Insurance-related tools are not a good solution and should not be financed by~~  
179 ~~CAP~~.
- 180
- 181 ~~15.~~ **Ensure the CAP is coherent with other policies:** CAP policy objectives must be coordinated  
182 with rural development, regional development and other related programmes. ~~The CAP~~  
183 ~~should also be coherent with objectives for wildlife and nature conservation, sustainable~~  
184 ~~water management, a circular economy, public health, international cooperation and~~  
185 ~~development, and the prevention and mitigation of climate change. The respect of human~~  
186 ~~and social rights of agricultural workers should be a condition to receive CAP subsidies. In~~  
187 ~~order to ensure greater coherence between policy areas and governance levels the relevant~~  
188 ~~EP Committees, EU Council formations and Commission DGs must be involved in the~~  
189 ~~reform process~~.
- 190
- 191
- 192 ~~16.~~ **15. Promote local seed use and exchange:** promoting local seeds and facilitating their  
193 exchange and circulation is essential. Incentives to local, established seeds, appropriate for  
194 the soil type, must be created through Pillar 2. ~~Support the development of animal breed~~  
195 ~~and seed varieties more adapted to environmentally friendly production methods. In~~  
196 ~~addition, encourage the use of local traditional animal breed~~.
- 197
- 198 **16. Animal welfare:** stricter standards for animal farms must be applied to be eligible for CAP  
199 subsidies. Animal transportation must be restricted and bodies violating this rule penalised  
200 by suspending CAP aid. The absolute maximum distance from farm to slaughterhouse  
201 must be fixed at 300 km (4 hours travelling). Grassland livestock must be prioritised  
202 through better ~~targeting of~~ direct payments. ~~Live animal exports must be strictly regulated.~~  
203 ~~Promote animal husbandry methods of raising animals that improve animal health and~~  
204 ~~welfare that thus decrease the need for medication. A~~ ~~The use of antibiotics~~ must be strictly  
205 regulated and ~~action against antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and compliance to these~~  
206 ~~regulations must~~ be a condition of CAP aid.
- 207
- 208 **17. Production of energy from biomass:** ~~CAP subsidies and renewable energy incentives~~  
209 ~~should not encourage the production of bioenergy when it has a negative impact on~~  
210 ~~environment and land use~~.
- 211
- 212 **18. Subsidy ceiling:** a €50,000 ceiling on subsidies must be implemented. This can only be  
213 exceeded if the farm employs a large number of workers or has a significant social and  
214 environmental performance. Appropriate measures should be implemented to avoid  
215 contravening this measure (e.g. splitting the land to comply with the law).  
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- 217 | ~~19.~~ **Simplification:** we are in favour of simplifying the CAP although not in the Commission's  
218 | understanding of the word. We are against renationalising the CAP, which would only exacerbate a  
219 | growing feeling of unfair competition among EU farmers. Instead, we demand a reduction in  
220 | bureaucracy and greater clarity and transparency of CAP procedures. ~~The amount of farmers'~~  
221 | ~~money spent on administration for CAP subsidies must be reduced.~~  
222 | 19.  
223 | 20. **More funds for monitoring:** to verify that the conditionality of CAP aids proposed in this  
224 | resolution is applied, we demand the creation of a European monitoring system (at the EU  
225 | level) for farms and producers receiving EU aid. A European research team should also be  
226 | set up to monitor the effectiveness of environmental measures. Objectives, sub-goals and  
227 | specific indicators need to be defined to allow evaluation.



## ANNEX I

The five principles that characterise an agro-ecological system (Altieri, 2002):

1. Recycling biomass and balancing nutrient flows and availability;
2. Securing favourable soil conditions for plant growth by enhancing organic matter;
3. Minimising losses of solar radiation, water and nutrients by managing microclimate and soil cover, and practising water harvesting;
4. Enhancing biological and genetic diversification on cropland;
5. Enhancing beneficial biological interactions and minimising the use of pesticides.

## ANNEX II

Organic agricultural land-management principles listed by IFOAM:

### Environmental aspects

- Good water and air quality – reducing stocking rates, managing manure and only using substances that have a limited impact on the agro-ecosystem;
- High on-farm biodiversity – conserving a high level of biological diversity to support a proper functioning agro-ecosystem and ecosystem services;
- Long-term stable soils – building and managing soil fertility and soil biological activity whilst maximising the recycling of nutrients and organic matter;
- Climate-change mitigation and adaptation – contributing to carbon sequestration, reducing energy use, optimised crop rotation and agroforestry.

### Socio-economic aspects

- Agricultural system diversity– preserving and developing farm genetic resources through the use of a diverse range of crop varieties and animal species;
- High animal welfare – providing farm animals with diets and living conditions which reflect their ecological role and allow them to express their natural behaviour;
- Aesthetic and resilient landscapes – ensuring the protection, enhancement and public accessibility to culturally and biologically diverse landscapes and features;
- Social capital – contributing to employment and the rural economy and interacting with the local community.