



WORLD BOARD

# TERM REPORT

2021 - 2024

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## Dear Members of the General Assembly,

It is with a profound sense of gratitude that we present this World Board Term Report for your consideration. The past few years have been marked by extraordinary challenges, not least of which was an unprecedented financial crisis that tested the very resilience and resolve of our organization. Through these trials, the dedication and strategic vision of our World Board have not only guided us through turbulent times but have set us on a path to renewed strength and prosperity.

In this report, you will find an interview with Karen Mapusua, whose leadership and insight have been instrumental in navigating our organization through these challenging periods. Her reflections capture the essence of our journey and the hope that has driven us forward.

The sections detailing the E-board and World Board Commitments highlight the unwavering dedication and strategic actions undertaken by our leaders. These commitments have been more than mere obligations; they represent heartfelt pledges to our mission and to the global organic community we serve. The relentless pursuit of excellence and innovation by our World Board has been the cornerstone of our recovery and growth.

Our Narrative Report chronicles the story of our collective journey—our struggles, triumphs, and the unwavering belief in the principles of organic agriculture that bind us. It is a testament to our unity, perseverance, and the collective power of our community.

The Strategic Plan outlined within this report is not just a roadmap for the future; it is a beacon of hope and ambition. It reflects our readiness to embrace the opportunities ahead and our renewed commitment to leading the organic movement into a new era of growth and influence.



Additionally, the Report on General Assembly Motions 2021-2024 provides a comprehensive review of the motions passed and their impacts, reflecting our commitment to transparency and accountability.

While the 2023 financial figures are still pending, we continue to uphold a commitment to transparency and financial accountability. The Internal Audit Report and the Statement of Income & Expenditures provide a comprehensive account of our financial health to date, reflecting the ongoing dedication of our leadership to prudent fiscal management and rigorous stewardship.

We also extend our deepest gratitude to our Committee Members, whose efforts and expertise have been invaluable. Our Donors, and Partnerships have provided the crucial support and resources needed to sustain and advance our mission.

This report is a celebration of our collective endurance, a reflection of the strategic foresight of our World Board, and a testament to the incredible dedication of our staff. Together, we have navigated the toughest moments, emerging stronger and more resilient. As we look to the future, we do so with a renewed sense of purpose and a resolved commitment to the principles of organic agriculture.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our shared mission.

**Ravi R. Prasad**  
Executive Director



# Interview with Karen Mapusua

## **As your tenure comes to a close, what would you consider the highlights of your time as President of IFOAM - Organics International?**

Without doubt it's been the opportunity to meet and get to know some of our members better. Even though much of this was virtual it was a real privilege to learn more about what our members are doing and achieving and to feel the energy and passion that is out there around the globe. That's why I joined IFOAM in the first place about 20 years ago!

It's actually easy to forget that much of the first 12 months of our term was still the COVID lockdown era and now we are all globally struggling with the fall out of that as well as conflicts, economic challenges. Given that context and the financial and management challenges we faced as a World Board- for the first 2 years, we were literally unsure of our organisational survival on a month to month basis. So the fact that we were able to utilise our 50th anniversary year to develop, with as much member participation as was possible, a new strategy to take us to the future and to turn around the finances of the organisation were real highlights. The response

and commitment from our members really shone here, it was members getting behind the World Board and supporting us financially but also with moral support as we worked to turn the situation around that gave me energy day to day. The staff also should be mentioned here, as we lost numbers the remaining staff picked up work well beyond job descriptions and gave full commitment to the organisation. Of the many highlights another that stands out was the opportunity to serve with such an amazing World Board – dedicated, talented people who gave their all plus some for IFOAM - Organics International over this term. Cross cultural working is a constant source of learning. We had misunderstandings, we challenged each other, and learned from each other's world views, we laughed and cried – all with good humour, love and from a humble posture of learning – it has been an amazing ride with them all.

## **Where do you see the greatest challenges and indeed potential for organic in the coming years?**

I think our biggest challenge is ourselves, we get in our own way. As an organic movement we spend a lot of time looking inward and caught



up in our own dynamics and politics – we spend an unbelievable amount of energy on that which would be much better spent on the real mission – growing organic for people and planet! The opportunities are everywhere, it's quite clear we are in a crumbling civilisation with the environmental, social and political crisis we see all around us. Our opportunity is to be the alternative – because people are looking for one. Organic can provide the environmental, biodiversity and climate solutions. It can feed people well, it can create just agrarian economies and fair markets. It can also build a lifestyle alternative and community around these shared principles of Health Ecology Fairness and Care. To make the most of these opportunities we must ensure we do not mirror the systems round us- not mirror the geopolitics, not mirror the extractive practices in our market development, not allow weakening of our standards and guarantees, and we must build alliances, be inclusive, and build equity in how we work.

#### What would be your message for our members?

First, thank you, sincerely. For your day-to-day work in organic and how that contributes to a better world, and for your commitment to IFOAM Organics International. It is through your efforts that we will see the change we want to see for our planet. Please also share what you are doing with the World Board and office. We want to amplify your successes and examples; these are the things that others learn from and demonstrate the impact of organic.

Second, let's keep our eyes on the horizon and the future that is emerging. We create the future by where we put our energy so let's focus on those transformative objectives of a more organic world and encourage each other on this journey.

#### Do you have any words of advice to share with the next World Board?

It is both a rewarding and challenging role, but a unique opportunity to serve the development of the organic movement- remember that when you are in a meeting at 11pm! Keep your eyes and ears to the members, we have started to find ways to increase communication and transparency between the World Board and members and I hope that continues and strengthens. Also, remember that the GA gives you a mandate to govern. Not all decisions are easy and not all decisions will make everyone happy, but that's governance. So, seek advice and counsel but don't be lobbied, take well considered decisions and stand by them, learn from mistakes, respect and learn from each other and laugh...possibly the most important thing.



**Karen Mapusua**  
President

# Introduction of the World Board 2021-2024



**Karen Mapusua**  
Fiji



**Julia Lernoud**  
Argentina



**Choitresh Ganguly**  
India



**Fortunate Nyakanda**  
Zimbabwe



**Jennifer Taylor**  
USA



**Marco Schlüter**  
Germany



**Miyoshi Satoko**  
Japan



**Paul Holmbeck**  
Denmark



**Sarah Compson**  
United Kingdom



**Shamika Mone**  
India

Dear Members of the General Assembly,

It is with deep appreciation and immense pride that I have the honor of introducing our World Board to you. Over the past several years, our organization has weathered extraordinary challenges, from global crises to the ever-evolving landscape of organic agriculture. Through it all, this Board has been a steadfast beacon of guidance, leading us with an unshakable commitment to our shared vision of a more sustainable, equitable, and organic world. Each member of this esteemed Board has balanced the heavy demands of their individual professional and personal lives with their responsibilities at IFOAM, often going above and beyond what was expected. Their dedication has not only kept us on course but has also inspired countless others within our global community to remain steadfast in their own commitments.

The diversity within this World Board has been a cornerstone of its strength. With members hailing from various regions, bringing unique perspectives and insights, we have ensured that our strategies and actions are reflective of the

broad spectrum of needs and challenges faced by organic farmers, producers, and consumers worldwide. This diversity has enriched our discussions, broadened our understanding, and ultimately led to more inclusive and effective decision-making. It is a testament to the power of collaboration and the importance of hearing voices from all corners of the globe.

As we stand on the threshold of a new chapter with the incoming World Board, I want to express my deepest thanks to each current member for their extraordinary service. Your work has laid a strong foundation that the next Board will build upon, and your legacy will undoubtedly continue to inspire us all. I look forward with optimism and excitement to the next three years, confident that they will be as productive, impactful, and inspiring as the tenure of this exceptional group.

**Ravi R. Prasad**  
Executive Director

# Executive Board Commitments

## Dear members, dear friends,

It might not come as a surprise that the WB, and in consequence the EBoard, undertook an extraordinary level of operational engagement in the organisation's day-to-day running. As EBoard members, we held the financial legal liability for IFOAM – Organics International, it was a term of intensive work to secure the organisation that brought significant personal stress, lot of learning and deep appreciation for our network, our movement, and all the extremely dedicated team we have.

Immediately, the EBoard initiated robust performance management to help strengthen and professionalize the internal processes in the organisation. In parallel, we actively engaged with the team to manage the fragile financial situation and office dynamics, which included a significant reduction in staff numbers and increasingly lower morale. The first 2 years of the term were especially intense with the EBoard meeting formally and informally at least once a week. The President met on average every 2 weeks with the ED, or Interim ED, however we must admit that more often it was a daily interaction to assist to manage the crisis and determine the course of action in rapidly changing circumstances.

When Executive Director Louise Lutikholt resigned, the EBoard and World Board members took responsibility for providing direct oversight

and support to the staff. The EBoard oversaw HR matters, leadership, membership, and the recruitment of the new Executive Director Ravi Prasad in close collaboration with the Interim ED, Marco Schlüter, also a World Board member.

The EBoard also led on initiatives and actions such as the Finance Taskforce, which analyzed the reasons behind the financial crisis, the new IFOAM – Organics International Strategy development, ensuring open participation and transparency, and the IFOAM Governance reform process, which aims to strengthen and fully empower our organisation and ensure fairness and promote equity in all its levels.

This EBoard would like to thank IFOAM – Organics International, all its members, its team, its World Board, its allies, each of you, for the support you gave us over these last three years and would like to wish us all a fruitful General Assembly and powerful global organic voice!

**Karen Mapusua** – President

**Bablu Ganguly** – Vice President

**Julia Lernoud** – Vice President

*Executive Board*

*IFOAM – Organics International*

# World Board Commitments



**Karen Mapusua**  
President

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- **Representation, member engagement and IFOAM Visibility:** represented and spoke at over 40 conferences and events through 2023-24 across 6 continents ranging from national and regional member congresses, technical and academic conferences, indigenous peoples' forums, to international events such as the Demeter 100 Years Anniversary of Biodynamics, COP 27 & 28 and World Food Summit events. Upward of 10 media engagements outside of these events.
- **New strategy and member engagement:** Facilitated consultation process with 2 regions and youth in the organic movement to dive deeply into desired focus and purpose of IFOAM - Organics International to feed into the strategy development. Led a strand of our strategy revision process on Leadership, and supported finalisation of the strategy. Drafted initial concepts for consultation process on the governance redesign based on new strategy.
- **Executive Board; Operations and Management support to Interim ED:** Provided support to the Interim ED on operational matters such as HR, resource mobilisation, ED recruitment. E Board met formally and informally on average every 2 weeks to discuss ongoing financial challenges and to support interim management arrangements. Facilitated Finance Taskforce to analysis reasons for the organisational financial crisis.



## Choitresh Ganguly (Bablu) Vice President



- **Represented IFOAM - Organics International, in person**, at various at events, conferences and meetings - Millets Festival, Bangalore, Organic Cotton and Textile Conference, Indore, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, Kolkata, ESG, Bangalore, Bharat Agroecology Fund, Bangalore, Organic Farmers Association of India Congress, Aluva.
- **Participated in person** - Strategy workshop, Bonn, WB meeting, Bonn, IFOAM Network leadership session, BIOFACH, Nuremburg and attended to EB duties and meetings, BIOFACH, Delhi
- **Participated in all virtual** WB and EB meetings along with strategy development, interviews, fund raising and other official matters.
- **Member visits:** Hosted Karen Mapusua, President IFOAM OI, April/May during her visit to Timbaktu Collective and Dharani Farmers' Coop, members of IFOAM - Organics International. Visited SEKEM, Egypt, member of IFOAM - Organics International, May; The Organic Farmers of India Conference in Kerala, Peermade Development Society and Keystone Foundation, December 2023/ January 2024, along with Karen Mapusua.

## Julia Lernoud Vice President



- Participated and contributed at all EB and WB meetings
- Together with the EB, held meeting with EBs of RB and relevant IFOAM partners
- Together with the EB, supported and steered the development of the new strategy
- Represented the WB at the Governance Reform Task Force
- Together with TC, held several meetings and interviews with members at BIOFACH 2022, 2023 and 2024
- Supported and oversaw the Membership department while the period without ED
- Supported the office for the upcoming GA preps
- Participated and contributed to the whole of the strategy process
- Participated and presented at BIOFACH 2022, 2023, 2024
- Participated of several international events representing IFOAM - Organics International
- Supported the organization and participated of the Action Group Day 2022, 2023 and 2024

### Other Activities

- Developed program and prep needed for the 2nd and 3rd Global Organic Youth Summit
- Worked on program for better access of organic and fair-trade products in LA
- Represented IFOAM LA in Network Council and since the 2023 IFOAM LA GA became part of the council of members



## Fortunate Nyakanda

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- **Key Speeches and Workshops:** Delivered keynote addresses and speeches representing IFOAM-OI at significant events such as the Madagascar Organic Sector policy workshop and EU Organic Day.
- **Strategic Meetings and Conferences:** Participated in important strategy meetings, including the IFOAM 50th Anniversary strategy meeting and commemorative conference.
- **Continental Steering Committee Participation:** Presented on behalf of IFOAM - Organics International at multiple Africa Union Ecological Organic Agriculture Development in Africa Continental Steering Committee meetings
- **Support for Organic Knowledge Hubs:** Actively supported and advised Organic Knowledge Hubs in Southern Africa through numerous meetings and webinars organized by the Sustainability Institute and GIZ
- **Governance and Policy Contributions:** Contributed to the governance and policy response, including addressing the Bayer sustainability controversy and supporting the IFOAM - Organics International Governance Taskforce



## Jennifer Taylor

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- Worked to promote the activities and work of IFOAM - Organics International and the IFOAM Principles of Organic Agriculture to enable organic for all in the United States
- Participated in IFOAM - Organics International World Board Meetings, Network Council Meetings, Membership Meetings when available.
- Represented IFOAM - Organics International in BIOFACH America.
- Supported World Board fundraising efforts in the United States with IFOAM North America

### IFOAM North America Activities

- President IFOAM North America
- Presented written and verbal comments to the USDA National Organic Standards Board for the National Organic Program that addressed the critical role of principles of organic agriculture and the need to strengthen capacity with underserved small farmers and organic farmers.
- Influential in securing funded opportunities that promote the principles of organic agriculture and agroecology-organic farming systems in “on the ground” work activities and organic change, aligned with global organic principles and priorities.

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## Marco Schlüter



- **Finance and fundraising:** Developed board strategy for addressing financial crisis in 2021 and secured significant member and donor support to IFOAM - Organics International both short and long term, as well as developing a franchise concept for future IFOAM Organic World Congress beginning with current OWC in Taiwan.
- **Interim Executive Director (part time, 1,5 years):** Stepped in at the World Board's request in a critical time to ensure leadership in the Head Office, consolidated the organisations finance and stabilized staffing, addressed shortfalls, review financial practices, costs and staffing needs and launch new project activities together with core staff.
- **Representation of IFOAM – Organics International:** Speaking engagements, meetings with allies, members and regional bodies on behalf of IFOAM - Organics International.
- **Strategy process:** Set up of a refreshed strategy process leading to IFOAM's new strategy in March 2023
- **Treasurer:** Accepted the new role as treasurer from February 2024 supporting financial consolidation process and monitoring
- **Governance:** Kicked off and set up ToR for the governance process.

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## Miyoshi Satoko



- **Representation of IFOAM OI and organic movements:** Represent IFOAM - Organics International at events and meetings such as 2023 BioFach Nuremberg and presenting at the Congress, 2024 Organic District world congress in Portugal.
- **Strategy making process:** Attending and Support strategy making progress and decision on the strategy. Leading the Policy and Guarantee thematic.
- **Promote IFOAM and its activities:** Deliver information and introduction of IFOAM - Organics International especially with the principles of organic agriculture. Including annual presentation about The World of Organic Agriculture at Premium Food Show in Tokyo and a Magazine interview (online and wrote an article) to promote IFOAM - Organics International and introduction of the World of OA.
- **Direct support and communication with IFOAM members:** Join meetings and gatherings that members had organized in person and online, such as PGS group field tour, online-study session as a speaker. Communicate with members also potential members, mostly in Asian region including delivering a presentation and moderating sessions at the Taiwan Youth Forum.
- **Participated and contributed to WB meeting** (online and in person)



## Paul Holmbeck

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- **Building IFOAMs visibility and alliances, positioning organics globally:** Dialogue with allies, support to staff, and direct lobby work in global fora to position organics, e.g. the successful inclusion of organic farming in World Food Summit conclusions and the COP28 non-state actor declaration on food systems. And representing and presenting the work of IFOAM Organics International at conferences across four continents, including debates on organic market development, policy needs and position on regenerative agriculture.
- **New IFOAM Strategy and member dialogue:** Deep dive into IFOAM member needs as basis for our new strategy, including processor roundtables, interviews with member organizations and dialogue with global allies and should-be members.
- **Co-author of concept paper for upscaled IFOAM Global Academy,** a core strategic initiative to systematically expand capacity development support to our members in advocacy, policy, market development and leadership.
- **Financial sustainability and member recruitment:** Successful fundraising in both IFOAMs "rescue" phase in the months after stepping on to the board, and in the current rebuilding phase. Recruitment and re-recruitment of members, particularly organizations and processors. Support to staff in fundraising strategy, project development and member recruitment.
- **Direct support to IFOAM members:** Voluntary advisory support to more than 20 member organizations in the areas of advocacy, national organic action plans, market development and organizational leadership. Sharing best practice, assisting with network contacts, helping with next steps as support from their global organization.



## Sarah Compson

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- Represented IFOAM - Organics International at events and conferences across the globe, particularly in relation to topics to do with regulation, certification and putting principles into practices
- Led a strand of our strategy revision process – consulting with members to develop a future-facing approach to certification systems that meet the needs and challenges of the currently established systems, whilst ensuring farmer-centred approaches can be developed and upscaled to more fully embed the organic principles.
- Actively contributed to the positioning of organic in the emerging 'regenerative' narrative, through events publications and workshops, in order to ensure organic's benefits and relevance are well understood by the global community.
- Represented IFOAM - Organics International on the Board of the International Organic Accreditation Service – contributing to the future strategy and direction of worldwide organic accreditation that is led by organic principles.

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## Shamika Mone



### Participation in Key Meetings and Conferences:

- Attended various IFOAM World Board Meetings, including strategy debriefing workshops, and planning sessions and IFOAM Network Council Meetings and Action Day
- Attended BIOFACH events in Nuremberg and India, and IFOAM Network Action Day
- Participated in the 9th ALGOA & 4th GAOD Summit and 6th Organic Asia Congress, delivering a keynote on the role of women farmers.
- Organized the 8th National Organic Farmers Convention of OFAI, inviting prominent figures

### Advocacy and Strategic Planning:

- Engaged in advocacy briefings and updates with key stakeholders
- Contributed to the development of IFOAM - Organics International's Strategy Plan and ED selection process

### INOFO Activities

- Attended the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA), including workshops, round table discussions, and expert panels
- Participated in the 1st East Africa Agro-ecology Conference
- Participated in the sub-regional IFAD Farmers Forum for Central-West Asia and East Europe in Istanbul.
- Held discussions on aligning INOFO Academy ideas with IFOAM Academy
- Coordinated and planned the I Grow Your Food Campaign live session with INOFO.



# Narrative Report



## Stepping into a hurricane

10 new World Board Members elected in September 2021 were excited to get started on the work of IFOAM – Organics International. All with very diverse backgrounds and with deep experience building the organic movement in almost every corner of the world.

Freshly inspired by debates and best practice presentations on policy, farm practices, advocacy and markets at the Organic World Congress, we were ready to strengthen the movement further.

We had all been told to expect four meetings a year. We held four meetings in the first week. A new assessment of IFOAM's financial situation was dire. Losses on projects, lack of member re-

cruitment and retention, no general fundraising, and a new loss of, at that time, undetermined size from the Covid related costs from the hybrid Organic World Congress promised to worsen the situation.

What was more challenging was that financial reporting and practices were severely outdated, highly complex and not transparent, and it was therefore difficult to get precision on the size and causes of losses. Like a hurricane, the pitch was deafening, but getting oriented and getting to safety was no easy task.

**The WB moved very quickly into crisis management mode.**

## Crisis management classic

There are many theories of crisis management, but it is always messy and harrowing for the people in the middle of it. Staff. Board members.

A natural reaction would be to bury one's head deeply in the sand, or say, fairly, "I didn't sign up for this."

The WB didn't do that. We did some classic crisis management:

- **Keeping it together.** This starts at the top. President Karen Mapusua showed real leadership and genuine cool in the crisis.
- **Getting the analysis right.** This was a challenge.
- **Identify priority actions.** The must wins. And who does what?
- **Work on the plan.** Keeping focus. Everyone on track.
- **Follow up. Re-group. Go at it again.**



## Fundraising Success – IFOAM Survives

**We had to raise 500.000 Euros in three months. We did it. IFOAM survived 2021.**

A group of World Board members and our ED reached out to members and allies. Calling, writing, following up. Explaining our situation and answering some very difficult questions. Several board members and our own ED put upwards of 5000 Euros each in the pot, senior staff took pay cuts. Some member organisations, companies, and individuals stepped up. This will not be forgotten!

We were also moved by the economic support (and patience) from IFOAM Asia and IFOAM Organics Europe and the assistance from IFOAM North America in enabling a philanthropic donation from the US. This too was critical for our survival.

IFOAM Asia mobilization of a set-up for our 50th anniversary celebration in Korea and finding a new host for OWC 2024, after an OWC in Tunisia sadly became unworkable, were also major steps towards our recovery.

**In tackling the crisis, we also discovered that, as in a drought, our roots were not deep enough.** Our relationships with our members were not deep enough. And membership was not broad enough. Several years with too little focus on member contact and engagement, and a lack of communication on the value of IFOAM's work and slow action on some key issues important for our members left the level of engagement low. When IFOAM came knocking, the response from some was "What has IFOAM done for us lately."



## Member communications

A classic error in a crisis is not informing members enough about what is going on. The focus is on survival. We did our best, sending a communique just weeks after the WB convened for the first time. But communication about the crisis—and WB and IFOAM – Organics Internationals work

generally has been too sporadic. Members deserve to be better informed on the projects and initiatives (seen here in this report) and what their board and staff are up to. Mobilizing member insights, input and engagement requires this. We are determined to do better.



## Not equipped for fundraising at the scale needed

Keeping the momentum in fundraising was difficult.

The lack of fundraising experience on staff left WB members spinning their wheels a bit and very much on their own. We had no one experienced in systematically designing or executing a fundraising campaign.

In the weeks after meeting the first fundraising goal, ensuring IFOAM-Organics International didn't close, the World Board began to focus on the function of the office. This included assessing systems and strengthening performance management. The stepping down of the ED and financial manager then triggered the search for a new ED. No easy task in an organization with some big challenges.



## Intrepid Interim

Marco Schlueter agreed to step in as interim ED, and it is fair to say that we all owe a debt of gratitude for his exceptionally dedicated trouble shooting and bridge to our new ED. For 18 months, and with great understanding and economic support from his employer and IFOAM–Organics

International member and ally Naturland, Marco fought to create financial clarity, guide staff and prepare key decisions on high-stakes issues, from OWC hosts, to audits, to dialogue with major donors and needed staffing changes.



## Strategy development

**Who develops a new strategy in the middle of a crisis? IFOAM – Organics International does.**

With the financial crisis, staff spirits were not high when the WB gathered in Bonn for the first in person session on our strategy. It was not a success. A facilitator was not a good match, energy was low, ownership of the process limited.

**Despite this we charted an ambitious plan for deep consultations with our members and allies, the largest consultation in our history.**

We consulted members region-by-region, held roundtable discussions with processors and traders and clusters of members. We interviewed dozens of members, both pioneers and young organic farmers, and asked allies what they expect from us. Partners from regions and platforms gave extensive input and joined us in Korea for strategy workshops. With the capable support of facilitator Raffael Zanolli, we boiled all this down to a strategy with three pillars and nine objectives. It was a rich process giving members great influence in forming our new strategy. As it should be. All in all, we involved over 20 percent of our members.

The result was also good. Member response is positive. The strategy is described elsewhere in this report, but be assured that the WB, ED and staff are working step by step to use the strategy as a compass guiding our work for:

**Empowering the organic movement worldwide.** Strengthening our members and network.

**Leading the organic movement globally.** Mobilizing members and allies to position organics.

**Building a sustainable future for IFOAM – Organics International.** Both finances, governance and competencies.

In the first period we are focusing on getting our house in order, ensuring financing and staffing in place for delivering on the other pillars: leading organics globally and upscaling our global academy to reach more members. A solid organization and strong financials as a building block for all our work for change.



## Projects as a tool of strategy

As a global project organization IFOAM – Organics International can utilize projects to drive change. We have some good project activities that our members know very little about. Our goal is to integrating projects into a change agenda, using them to spread best practices regionally and globally and to empower frontline organisa-

tions in their work to put policy, knowledge and markets at the service of people and planet, and not the opposite. Projects only have meaning as strategic elements in a coordinated strategy. We have such a strategy now. It focuses on empowering members and driving transformative change.



## Staff have been through a lot

It has not been easy working in IFOAM in this period. Uncertainty. Worry. Even before the crisis, our home office culture was not ranking high on team spirit and satisfaction with leadership, wages and opportunities for learning were low. Despite this, many staff have shown extraordinary dedication in this difficult period and the World Board thanks them.

**There has also been a need for alignment of values.** A particular form of project culture has given more and more distance to members. Were we becoming an NGO with projects, rather than an organization for members and our movement.... that also has impactful projects driving change. Some staff would go through hell and high water for our members and our organization. Others

had little knowledge of member-based organisations or movements, and too little contact to members to really appreciate their insights, vision, experience or humor.

**Our organizational culture is now slowly being rebuilt.** Greater solidarity and accountability. Collaborative and agile. Passionate for change. And with greater focus on strengthening our members in their work. This is led by our new ED, but all have a role in shaping culture. Including the World Board. We are determined to reshape our organization to one of purpose, celebrating diversity and with a strong focus on support to members and partners that are driving change on the ground.



## Diversity is strength. Humor is armour.

The board's diversity, like in nature and farming, has been a strength. 7 women and 3 men... from India (2), Argentina, Germany, Zimbabwe, Japan, UK, Denmark, United States and Fiji. We had wildly varying experiences and insights, diverse perspectives on democracy, organisations, money and strategy, and different reactions to the same information or problem. **The wide diversity on the World Board allowed us to respond to the shock of multiple crises. Just like wider genetic diversity gives more robustness in nature and in farming to shocks of climate or drought.**

The appreciation, curiosity and outright hilarity of the many differences of culture and personality

wove unlike people together into an unbreakable team. Fear, frustration and worry did not tear the board apart, has melded us together. Humor also helps. A self-deprecating humor and healthy doses of inter-cultural teasing keep all humble and laughing. But also, free to be imperfect and above all, honest.

This bond also held the WB, and with it IFOAM, together in tough times. Our thanks go to our Executive Board, Karen Mapusua, Bablu Ganguly and Julia Lernoud who lifted the heaviest weight, consulting on average weekly throughout three years.



## Governance does matter

The WB listened to the many voices in our network calling for governance reform. We want to be a better coordinated movement, organised in a way that increases collaboration, synergies, best use of resources and our influence. So even as other crises had to be addressed, we committed to a broad dialogue on our governance. We

have strived for a more transparent, agile and democratic governance, that is inviting for member engagement and fosters collaboration, accountability and leadership across our network.



## New leadership

We also reached a significant milestone in the seeking and finding of our new ED Ravi Prasad. Hired in January, **Ravi is already setting a direction for staff and our organization using our strategy, and decades of experience, as a compass to navigate in difficult waters.** Ravi's global network is already mobilized in his efforts to strengthen our position, visibility, alliances and financing. We

appreciate and applaud the consortium of members who stepped in to ensure financing for the ED hire, also for the many hard questions and tough love from these allies. We thank FiBL, Se-kem, Bio Suisse, and Biovision Africa Trust for their commitment and Naturland for enabling Marco's time as our Interim ED.



## Looking forward

As we look forward to OWC and GA 2024, we experience both fatigue and hope. We have a stronger and more transparent financial situation. We have a new strategy, with a strong focus on our members. We are slowly increasing our visibility and leadership globally. We have new (and old) staff appreciative of new leadership and direction.

We are not out of the weeds yet. But we have survived crises that would have closed many organisations, and we are building back better for our members and our vision for transformative change.

Thank you to all who have contributed to our own transformation!



# Our New Strategic Plan

## How we got there



The World Board determined the need for a new strategic plan soon after taking office. This was driven by the recognition that achieving the ambitions of Organic 3.0 involved many stakeholders beyond IFOAM - Organics International and that we needed to find our clear role in achieving these ambitions rather than spread ourselves across too many areas and priorities. We saw also that our programmes and activities were frequently more opportunistic than strategic resulting in a broad and difficult to manage portfolio of work and a lack of focus on member service and priorities. We needed focus. The World Board also took on the mantle of managing a significant financial crisis for the organisation and needed to prioritize, downsize and chart a course that would bring the movement together, clarify our purpose and build partner confidence. All needed if IFOAM - Organics International was to survive.

The process ran through the 50th Anniversary year supported by external facilitation starting with a workshop in Bonn with World Board and staff. From this and calling on information from recent member surveys and the midterm review of the existing strategy, consultations were held with focus groups of members and stakeholders across 4 themes or sub-contexts: **Advocacy; Policy & Guarantee; Capacity development; Commercial / Non-members**. The aim was to dialogue about what our members and partners see and experience. What they value in our work. What they are critical of. What challenges we/they face. What roles they hope that IFOAM OI will play.

Beyond our memberships, we also held interviews with 10 processors and traders plus 2 round table discussions (11 additional processors and traders) about organic challenges and ideas for IFOAM's work plus interviews with allies and partners in AFSA and the Agroecology Coalition.

For policy and guarantee, we spoke to key organisations working on the policy and guarantee

across the globe. We also sought out the views of those involved in the early formation and development of IFOAM standards as well as people and organisations working at the forefront of innovation around guarantee systems – such as those involved in the development of PGS.

Capitalizing on opportunities to have members together at the 50th Anniversary Conference in Korea a sense making workshop was held with 32 IFOAM - Organics International members, World Board members, International and Regional Body staff to verify and further develop the data and information gathered in the first consultation round. Based on the outcomes of this workshop the World Board with support of a facilitator and the IFOAM - Organics International staff defined the 3 strategic objectives: Global leadership of the organic movement; Empowerment of organic development worldwide; and Financial and organisational stability.

The World Board then led another round of focus group consultations to undertake a strategic gap analysis and cluster the gaps that were identified during consultations and develop corresponding strategic actions that would be viable and align with feedback from the consultation rounds. Representatives of over 30 members from all continents with a mix of long-term members, youth and emerging leaders joined these focus groups along with World Board members and relevant staff of IFOAM - Organics International and Regional Bodies.

As a final step, another workshop was held in Bonn with World Board and staff as well as representatives of the IFOAM - Organics Europe and IFOAM AgriBioMediterraneo. This workshop also started framing the business model options for IFOAM - Organics International going forward. The World Board then, after a process that took over a year and involved directly over 20% of members in addition to other stakeholders, finalised and approved the strategy in March 2023.

# The Strategy

## Context

In a world threatened by ecosystem and climate collapse, organic farming systems can be a real game changer.

Organic is currently practiced and supported by millions of farmers and consumers around the globe. It contributes to the production of healthy, nutritious food, natural fibres and other natural products; regenerates and enhances soil fertility and biodiversity; safeguards and replenishes scarce resources; and helps people adapt to the most pressuring challenges we face nowadays.

IFOAM – Organics International has designed a new strategy to upscale and further develop organic farming and food systems.

## A New Vision & Mission

### Vision

The widespread adoption of truly regenerative organic food and farming systems, grounded in the principles of organic agriculture: health, ecology, fairness, and care.

### Mission

We empower, mobilise, and lead the global organic movement and its allies to drive transformative food and farming systems changes and policies for the benefit of people and the planet.

## Objectives

Our new strategy will unite members and allies, build new partnerships, set a global agenda and empower the organic movement to drive change around the world. It rests on three complementary and intertwined objectives to empower and lead the organic movement.

### Objective 1 Empower organic worldwide

Through equipping members and allies with the competencies, tools and community needed to develop and upscale organic agriculture, policies and markets worldwide. This will also enable regional and sectoral development within our network.

### Objective 2 Lead the organic movement globally

Spearheading transformative change by positioning organic farming and food systems as a solution to global crises. This requires convening inclusive conversations, building partnerships, mobilising organic stakeholders and allies across cultures and generations.

### Objective 3 Building a sustainable future for IFOAM – Organics International

Including restructuring our membership and governance model to better reflect the diversity and development of the organic movement and sector; upskilling our teams; and further developing our core competencies and flagship products in the interest of our organic stakeholders.

# General Assembly 2021

# Motions

## & Recommendations



## Implementation Report

This document reports on the implementation of the 2021 General Assembly (GA) motions.

### World Board Motions

#### MOTION W51

#### Empowerment and Inclusion of Youth in the IFOAM Network and the Organic Movement

**MOTION TEXT:** The IFOAM Network acknowledges the crucial role of youth in the further development of the organic sector and shall take concrete steps for the empowerment and inclusion of young people within its structures and in the organic movement. IFOAM – Organics International shall work in coordination with the regional bodies, sector platforms and global membership, as well as relevant global actors.

**REPORT:** For the first time in IFOAM – Organics International's history youth were intentionally included in consultations on strategy development. We also acknowledge and support the development of youth activities in Asia and in the European Union led by the regional bodies and the Young Organics Global Network.

We empower and include young people in the organic movement through trainings. We have secured funding for 4 years to run courses in Africa and Asia to provide trainings for future leaders in the organic movement, most of whom are youth. Jointly with members and partners, we are developing curricula on PGS and ICS as well as on organic agriculture in general that we ambition to be a part of university courses.

We advocate for policies directly in various countries as well as at the global level to bring youth to the table when it comes to making decisions on agriculture and food systems. We have secured funding for this for the next 4 years.

## MOTION W52

### 50 years IFOAM – Organics International

**MOTION TEXT:** The IFOAM Network celebrates in an inclusive way its 50th anniversary in several parts of the world, in a variety of ways. The IFOAM Network, with all its members, will declare 2022 the Year of Organic. All parts of the network include the celebration in their planned activities, like conferences and communications, and use the occasion for a global membership campaign. IFOAM – Organics International will support the efforts with a promotional tool kit that will be published in different languages, if resources are available within the network.

**REPORT:** The 50th anniversary of IFOAM – Organics International took place in different stages throughout 2022:

- BIOFACH. During IFOAM's Booth party.
- [2022 IFOAM - Goesan International Organic Expo](#) in South Korea.
- A [declaration](#) was published summarising 10 actions that can pave the way for good, clean and fair organic food and farming for all.

We developed and communicated to the membership the following promotional resources:

- A conceptual branding to promote the Year of Organics
- A [virtual timeline](#) to showcase the history of the organisation.
- A [dedicated website](#) on the Year of Organics
- A [communications toolkit](#) promoting the Year of Organics

Given the financial and institutional crisis, we couldn't celebrate as we wanted. However, we managed to celebrate around the world with our members, showing the resilience and generosity of our movement. We want to thank all the members and partners that helped us make 2022 the Year of Organics!

## MOTION W53

### Terms of Reference for the Internal Audit

**MOTION TEXT:** The General Assembly approves the amended Terms of Reference for the Internal Audit of IFOAM – Organics International as published on page 39 of Organics in Action, with references to Price Waterhouse Cooper (PwC) replaced with the more generic term 'external auditor'.

**REPORT:** The text of the document has been changed according to the GA decision. It is uploaded in the Resource Library of the Member Area of the membership directory in preparation for the GA in Taiwan. Affiliates are enabled herewith to access relevant policies and procedures at any time.

## MOTION W54

### Motion on OWC Consortium Participation

**MOTION TEXT:** The General Assembly mandates IFOAM – Organics International to participate in an organising consortium for the organisation of future Organic World Congresses.

**REPORT:** IFOAM – Organics International participated in the organisation of the OWC taking place in Taiwan. Due to unexpected complications with the host selected by the GA (Tunisia), IFOAM took the opportunity to host the event in Taiwan. Due to time constraints, the Congress Steering Committee served as a consortium for the OWC. It included representations from IFOAM Organics International, IFOAM Asia, and the Taiwanese organic movement alongside local authorities. IFOAM – Organics International made sure that the voices of our members were heard. IFOAM also collaborated with local authorities to make the event a success, even if the time to organise the event was three times shorter than in previous years.

## MOTION W55

### Motion on One Membership

**MOTION TEXT:** The GA confirms the World Board changes to policy 23 under point 6 on 'Affiliation & voting rights' to introduce 'One Membership' and to abolish the option of 'supporting associate'. The one membership concept starts from January 2024 and will be developed in accordance with the regional bodies considering existing by-laws, rules of procedure and membership fee schemes.

**REPORT:** After presenting a timeline of the process to the Network Leadership session in March 2022, the process was put on ice due to the loss of management capacity in the international office and the following economic crisis. Furthermore, this first groundwork showed that many members wouldn't be able or willing to cover the extra fee, which manifests diverse interests and capacities within our movement. Meanwhile, the WB started a consultation process to develop the new strategy which led to a broader uptake of membership. IFOAM – Organics International membership processes, services, etc., will be reviewed and adapted to serve our members better, the IFOAM Network, and the global organic movement within the implementation of the new strategy.



## MOTION W56

### on Decentralised Membership Fee Setting – changes in policy 9

**MOTION TEXT:** The World Board shall change policy 9 effective January 1, 2023 to decentralise the setting of membership fees, in order to be fully implemented by January 2024. The change shall be phased in over a three-year period with a progress report to be presented at the next General Assembly. 1. IFOAM – Organics International, together with the Network Council, will define the member types based on existing (regional) categories. Regional Bodies may select member types that fit their regional needs. 2. Each regional body sets its membership fee structure and fees consistent with its own by-laws and rules of procedure and existing membership fee schemes where applicable. 3. The World Board sets fees for affiliates based in regions without a Regional Body. 4. Each Regional Body is obligated to contribute a proportion of its fees to IFOAM – Organics International based on discussion between the Regional Body and IFOAM – Organics International, which should ensure a minimum income to IFOAM – Organics International and at the same time help the development of the Regional Bodies. 5. IFOAM – Organics International, with the Network Council, will work out the role and relationship of supporters and associates.

**REPORT:** As with motion W55, the process was stopped given financial and personnel restraints. However, within the new strategy the membership plays a crucial part, and how fees are set will be a part of the evaluation process.

## MOTION W57

### Motion on Terms of Reference (ToR) for the World Board of IFOAM – Organics International

**MOTION TEXT:** To clarify and update the role and mandate of the World Board and its members, the General Assembly replaces the Rules of Procedure for the World Board, which were decided in 2000, by updated ToRs as published hereafter.

**REPORT:** The World Board elected at the GA 2021 was introduced to the newly approved WB ToR and implemented it thereafter. The new ToR was filed on the in-house server and in the Resource Library of the Online Directory Member Area.

# Member Motions

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## MOTION M61

### Hydroponic Production Not in Line with Organic Principles

**MOTION TEXT:** IFOAM - Organics International adopts the following position and advocates for it within national and international fora and to private and government standard setters: Hydroponic production does not align with the Principles of Organic Agriculture and cannot be considered as an organic production method. Hydroponic production is completely dependent on external inputs and does not enhance a living ecosystem that connects mineral soils, organic matter, billions of microbes fed by the roots of plants, soil animals, and the plants themselves.

**In short:** Terrestrial plants grow in soil and subsoil.

**REPORT:** One of the [IFOAM Principles of Organic Agriculture](#) is the [Principle of Ecology](#). IFOAM - OI make it clear on their website: Organic Agriculture should be based on living ecological systems and cycles, work with them, emulate them and help sustain them. In the case of crops this means that production should be based on the living soil.

This has been the basis for all advocacy and communications activities conducted since the principles were adopted.

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## MOTION M62

### Organic Leadership on Deforestation

**MOTION TEXT:** IFOAM – Organics International shall develop leadership on deforestation and land use change to:

- Realise the potential of the organic movement to deliver SDG15
- Realise the global market opportunity for organic to guarantee ‘deforestation free’
- Remain relevant within competitive global markets and able to defend the sustainability of organic products

IFOAM – Organics International World Board shall:

- Mandate the IFOAM Standards Committee to develop clear implementing rules and guidelines
- Foster action and innovation that combats both deforestation and other detrimental land use change across the global organic movement
- Promote organic diversified agroforestry in the tropics and wherever possible as an effective tool to stop and compensate deforestation.

#### REPORT:

IFOAM – OI is an active member of the Climate Land Ambition & Rights Alliance that has protecting forests and communities as its main mission. Together with partners there, we regularly speak up against deforestation and false climate solutions related to forests.

We have been an organizing partner of a session on agroforestry at UNFCCC COP27 to highlight the benefits this production method can bring and also held on it hands-on presentations by agroforestry farmers at COP28.

We have teamed up with Oro Verde to compile a proposal for a large project in Latin America to foster and improve the implementation of the EU Deforestation Regulation, involving local organic stakeholders.

Lacking resources, we have not made progress internally on making organic truly ‘deforestation free’.

**MOTION**  
**M63**

## Promote No-till Farming Techniques for Sustainable Organic Farming

**MOTION TEXT:** IFOAM – Organics International should raise the profile of successful organic no-till farming in its communication activities around the world and its best practice guidelines.

IFOAM – Organics International should promote the further development of Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) by identifying common challenges and pitfalls of existing initiatives and by compiling tools, solutions and best-practices examples, to help PGS initiatives and promoters in addressing these common challenges. All these would contribute to achieving six elements of Organic 3.0. PGS further development should promote the inclusion of Social and Environmental Criteria to be in line at least with the IFOAM standard, and fully coherent with the organic 3.0 vision and the SOAAN (The Sustainable Organic Agriculture Action Network) best practices, for a stronger and more effective implementation of the organic agriculture principles.

**REPORT:** Like in the past, during this period IFOAM – Organics International has been a strong promoter of PGS at all fora from global to national. We have celebrated the adoption of PGS in national legislation and helped PGS initiatives at various stages of development make a step further. With our members, we are organizing events, compiling case studies for decision makers and collecting and publishing data on PGS regularly.

No-till farming techniques remain to be in the toolbox of organic agriculture and are promoted by IFOAM – Organics International along with other sustainable agricultural practices.

**MOTION**  
**M65**

## Biodiversity Awareness towards Agriculture

**MOTION TEXT:** IFOAM – Organics International should intensify its activities to raise awareness of the benefits and replicate best practices of organic agriculture for biodiversity.

**REPORT:** Collaborating with organizations such as WWF and the Global Alliance for the Future of Food, we have been actively promoting organic agriculture to be included in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) as a means of preserving biodiversity. As leaders of the Panorama Thematic Community on Agriculture and Biodiversity, we are constantly collecting and publishing initiatives based on organic agriculture that successfully contribute to biodiversity protection.

## MOTION M66

### Improve Global Organic Data Availability

**MOTION TEXT:** IFOAM – Organics International should cooperate more closely with FiBL in order to improve the availability, quality and accuracy of global organic area and crop data as well as the production of animal origin food.

**REPORT:** Together with FiBL, IFOAM – Organics International have been investing resources in improving ways to collect data on organic production. This has born results for some countries, where others are still lagging. IFOAM – OI will continue its collaboration with FiBL on the annual publication of the book titled 'The World of Organic Agriculture', constantly extending the scope of the reviews. A section on policies has recently been added to the already existing ones on regulations and PGS. Data collected are widely used by IFOAM – Organics International and the network in publications, presentations and social media.

## MOTION M67

### IFOAM Regional Bodies (RB) Strengthen and Support the Organic Farmers Organisations in their Regions

**MOTION TEXT:** The General Assembly encourages every regional body of IFOAM – Organics International to set aside resources – skills, finance or expertise – to support farmers organisations in their region in order to help bonding between different stakeholders of the organic value chain and build synergies that would help construct a stronger grass-rooted foundation for IFOAM – Organics International.

**REPORT:** Although the motion primarily targets regional bodies, IFOAM – Organics International have also continued its capacity building and fundraising activities to contribute to the development of INOFO and its member organizations. Using funds from donors, we have contributed to empowering farmers organizations which are part of the Organic Knowledge Hubs in Africa and communicated success stories of many member organizations.

## MOTION M68

### Add Gender Equality and Social Inclusion to the Principle of Fairness

**MOTION TEXT:** The IFOAM – Organics International Office and World Board should revise the Fairness Principle to incorporate Inclusiveness in the Principle's statement and add Gender Equality and Social Inclusion language to the explanation text.

**REPORT:** IFOAM – Organics International promoted widely gender equality and social inclusion in its advocacy and communications, adopted policies, and followed good practices



## MOTION

**M68**

Continued...

in this regard. The explanation text of the Fairness Principle gives a clear indication of the intention to cover 'equity, respect, justice and stewardship of the shared world; both among people and in their relations to other living beings', without specifying equity and inclusion further. Given the difficult period in the life of the organization, we couldn't, unfortunately, start the process required to change the explanatory text of the principle of Fairness.

## MOTION

**M69****Agroecology Criteria in IFOAM Best Practice Guidelines**

**MOTION TEXT:** IFOAM – Organics International will evaluate and make recommendations for the inclusion of Agroecology and other likeminded movements' criteria and parameters in the next review of the IFOAM Best Practice Guideline for Agriculture and Value Chains, coherent with Organic 3.0.

**REPORT:** We have evaluated the current use of various terms that refer to sustainable agriculture, including agroecology, regenerative agriculture, natural farming and many others and conclusions will be fed into the next revision of the IFOAM Best Practice Guidelines.

IFOAM – OI promote agroecology, as defined by FAO's 10 Elements the HLPE's 13 Principles which is indicated by the acquisition of a 4-year programme titled 'Agroecology Promotion Programme', led by IFOAM – Organics International and implemented together with several likeminded international and regional organizations.

## MOTION

**M70****To Expand the Current Scope of the COROS**

**MOTION TEXT:** IFOAM – Organics International will launch a membership discussion and position development on what should be considered "organic" (and defined accordingly through standards), beyond including an extension of the current scope of the COROS. The discussion would include, for example, textile and cosmetic processing, cleaning products, mineral and spring water, salt, eco-construction products, and others. The first sector to be discussed will be minerals and spring water.

**REPORT:** Due to the lack of resources and capacity to coordinate action around this motion, there has been no progress in finding a common position on whether the organic movement should expand the current scope of the COROS in this regard.

## MOTION M71

### Build Partnerships with the Health Sector

**MOTION TEXT:** IFOAM – the Organic Agriculture movement – can become more widely known and impactful. Through its regional groups in strategic partnerships with enterprises in the field of communal catering (e.g. hospitals, nursing homes, wellness hotels, prisons, educational establishments etc.) as well as with influential, forward-thinking and open-minded organisations like Friday for Future. Embedded in such a strong regional network, it would be easier for all fellow nutrition campaigners to reach the goal of a global paradigm shift.

**REPORT:** IFOAM – Organics International continued to build relationships towards likeminded organizations including environmental, social and health movements. The Agroecology Promotion Programme will put nutrition-sensitive agriculture in focus, creating an opportunity for even better collaboration with the health sector. We are seeking ways to strengthen links to emerging movements, too, particularly through our climate change-related activities.

## MOTION M72

### To Develop a Social Justice Position

**MOTION TEXT:** This assembly desires IFOAM – Organics International, as ethical standard-bearer of the movement, to:

- State its position on social justice & socio-economic implications of its production method.
- Make it known to the public, policymakers, standard setters private & public.
- Translate the resulting position & propose actions in consultation with all bodies of IFOAM – Organics International & related movements, all facing grave social challenges

The consultation shall identify themes to address including these problems involving organic farmers & the value chain:

- World Trade & “Free” Trade Agreements
- Land grabbing & monocultures

## MOTION M72

### continued...

#### REPORT:

IFOAM – Organics International's position on social justice is expressed in the Principle of Fairness, the IFOAM Standard, the Organic 3.0 document, and our Best Practice Guidelines.

The 9th chapter of the IFOAM Standard dedicated to Social Justice reads:

'Operators should respect the rights of indigenous peoples and should not use, or exploit land whose inhabitants or farmers have been or are being impoverished, dispossessed, colonized, expelled, exiled or killed, or which is currently in dispute regarding legal or customary local rights to its use or ownership.

(...)

9.1. Production that violates human rights and social justice requirements in this chapter cannot be declared organic.

9.2 Operators shall not violate indigenous land rights.'

In addition to these and as part of the implementation of Motion 74, IFOAM – OI is to publish a report on social justice in organic standards. Based on its findings, IFOAM – OI is conducting extensive advocacy at the national, regional and global level.

## MOTION M73

### To Encourage SoS to Conduct Consultations on Social Justice

#### MOTION TEXT:

**The General Assembly invites the self-organised Regional Bodies & Sector Platforms of IFOAM – Organics International to:**

- **Conduct their own decentralised social justice consultations in each region of the world.**
- **Mandate delegates to send input from their thinking about the social aspects towards formulation of the IFOAM Social Justice position paper.**
- **Publish the result internally via affiliated and other grass-roots organisations and externally via policymakers, institutions, partners, events and media.**

#### REPORT:

According to information available to IFOAM – OI, IFOAM SoS have not held consultations on social justice yet. The publication of the report compiled as a result of the implementation of Motion 74 will provide a good information basis for them to run such consultations on the topic.

## MOTION

### M74

## Social Justice in Organic Standards

### MOTION TEXT: IFOAM – Organics International will:

- **Advocate for social criteria in organic standards, in accordance with the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights of Work and defined in 12 key ILO Norms.**
- **Set SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timebound) for IFOAM – Organics International Family of Standards' standards to comply with the requirements for social justice, as included in the IFOAM Norms and ILO norms.**
- **Enter dialogue with standard setters with a view to implementation of standards for social justice, verifiable by independent organic certification bodies and / or reliable Participatory Guarantee Systems.**

### REPORT:

After consultations with the Motioner, IFOAM – OI divided the implementation of the Motion into 2 parts:

Phase 1 – Inception Phase: conducting comprehensive research on social justice in organic standards and planning of advocacy activities.

Phase 2 – Advocacy: towards standard setters to include social justice criteria in their standards.

By mid-2024 IFOAM – Organics International finalized and got approved a comprehensive report on social justice in organic standards. The research on over 20 national and regional organic standards confirmed that only a few of these standards used in low and middle-income countries include social justice norms. However, the absence of social justice norms in national organic regulations does not excuse organic operations from upholding human and labour rights, as these rights may be covered by other legislation even if not explicitly addressed by organic standards. The majority of countries with an organic regulation have ratified most of the fundamental ILO conventions and have corresponding national human labour rights legislation that also applies to organic operations.

IFOAM – Organics International therefore concluded that, besides updating Social Justice Norms in the IFOAM Standard and revising the practice of COROS assessment, IFOAM – Organics International should increase transparency regarding the issue of social justice and acknowledge which standards incorporate social justice norms and which do not. It should also continue to provide technical support to countries or entities who decide to include social justice into their standards and upscale its advocacy efforts regarding fairness in the organic value chains.

IFOAM – Organics International will conduct advocacy in this regard in the coming years.

## MOTION M75

### Mapping of Benchmark Programmes to Measure Best Practices & Sustainability Impact

**MOTION TEXT:** To do a mapping exercise on experiences that have developed benchmark programmes, indicators and metrics to measure progress towards best practice and sustainability impacts, with rewarding mechanisms through additional labels, or subsidies and incentives. It should explore the role that different references (including the IFOAM Standards and the Best Practices Guidelines) could play in providing a harmonised framework to support and recognise initiatives that go beyond the classical regulation and certification mechanism in an Organic 3.0 spirit.

**REPORT:** Due to the lack of capacity and funding, the mapping exercise has not been done yet. Nevertheless, we are tirelessly advocating for the IFOAM Standards and the Best Practice Guidelines to be adopted as a basis for sustainability schemes and benchmark programmes.

## MOTION M76

### Revise Voting Rights for Group Members

**MOTION TEXT:** The GA mandates the World Board to revise the Affiliation Policy in regard to the Group Membership offer: the mother organisation to be granted voting rights according to the membership criteria, the daughter organisations (branch offices) to be granted Associate status (full visibility and involvement but no voting rights) no matter whether they fulfill the criteria for a voting member or not.

**REPORT:** The text of the policy has been changed according to the GA's decision. It is uploaded in the Resource Library of the Member Area of the membership directory in preparation for the GA in Taiwan. Affiliates are enabled herewith to access relevant policies and procedures at any time.

Group members have been informed about the change in regard to voting rights in the invoicing process 2024. Each branch associate member fulfilling the criteria for voting members was invited to consider the option to pay the full membership and gain voting right in exchange. This branch is thereafter not considered part of the group agreement anymore.

# Internal Auditors' Report 2022 – 2024



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## Background information

The Internal Auditors (IAs) were appointed during the online General Assembly in 2021, with the main objective being to assess whether the motions and recommendations of the General Assembly (GA) is being carried out and whether the activities developed and implemented by the World Board (WB) and Office are in accordance with goals and objectives of IFOAM – Organics International, as mentioned in statutes and the strategic plan of the organization.

The internal audit activities are coordinated by Thomas Cierpka, Senior Manager responsible for Membership and Operations. All the documents required for the internal audit are made available to the IAs timely as well as the arrangements for the in situ and online meetings with the staff according to the proposed agenda.

There was an Annual Audit office visit in 2022 and an online audit in 2024. Due to the difficult situation IFOAM – Organics International has been in, there was no audit in 2023.

## Management: World Board, Executive Director (ED) and the office staff

The past years have been very difficult for the organization. The first internal audit took place in March 2022 in the office in Bonn. The new World Board has just begun working and was trying to prioritise topics to lead IFOAM – Organics International into a sustain-

able future. The financial situation was very fragile at that moment already and became even more problematic in the years to come. The difficult situation led to dissatisfaction also within staff members. Louise Luttkholt left IFOAM – Organics International end of July 2022 and Marco Schlüter acted as interim ED until Ravi R. Prasad took the job over in January 2024.

The international office lost more than half of the office staff during the 3-year period and was not able to replace each person with new staff until the second audit in 2024.

IAs note that the World Board has been involved more deeply in tasks, which originally should not have been on their agenda and thanks to their high involvement, the good work done by the staff and the work done by the interim ED, the organization was able to survive the crisis times.

However, IAs propose to the new ED to focus on strengthening the management of the organization again and focus on making IFOAM – Organics International more attractive as employer in the future.

## Motions

There were 28 Motions accepted during the online General Assembly in 2021. IAs noted and discussed with the ED Louise Luttkholt in 2022 and Ravi R. Prasad in 2024 as well as members of staff that the number of motions and the finances needed to realize



them are far away from what IFOAM - Organics International can do. The World Board decided to not follow every motion, but to focus on those the staff team is able to realize capacity wise. IAs checked the current state of the motions and was offered a detailed list by the office team with the information who is responsible, what has been done and if so, why a motion could not be followed in the 3-year term.

IAs noted and discussed with both ED's and staff that members might need a different platform to discuss topics.

## Membership and Regional Groups

The past years have not been easy for the organic sector which was also reflected by the number of paying affiliates. There also have been situations where members leave IFOAM - Organics International but stay a member of a Regional Body. IAs have noted that the new ED Ravi R. Prasad has already begun to increase communication with the Regional Bodies and the platforms. IAs recommend to focus on this to use it also as a way of promotion for the international organization. The RBs play an important role in communicating the work the international body is doing and promoting its activities.

IFOAM - Organics International shall combine its representativity with a diversity and a great number of members, and to have fees system which is compatible with the means of a small organization. Small organizations represent a big part of the members. A right balance shall be found.

## Projects

A significant number of projects needs a good project management and the risk of financial dependence has to be watched closely. Due to the difficult financial situation IFOAM - Organics International is in, the IAs note and support the need to acquire public funds to guarantee a financial stability for the next years. A good quality system for project management has to be implemented in the future.

## Budget and Reserves

After very difficult past years the year 2022 ended slightly positively thanks to the good work done by everybody involved. But the financial situation of the organization is still fragile. Many actions had to be

taken to avoid bankruptcy. IAs highly recommend to the ED and World Board to have special attention to the financial situation and to communicate the situation openly to the members. Although already recommended by IAs in 2021 and 2022 the communication about the situation was not transparent, even not to the IAs.

## Organic World Congress (OWC)

The Congress of 2021 was held in an uncertain situation, first a postponement of the congress from 2020 to 2021 due to the pandemic. Finally, the congress was a "hybrid" congress with a lot of additional costs not foreseen in the initial budget. Despite the situation the congress had very good speakers and good discussions. There have been several issues noted in the organization of the congress, particularly concerning governance and there are still financial questions, which have not been finalized even in 2024. The congress in 2024 was voted to be in Tunisia, but for several reasons will now take place in Taiwan. Again there are a lot of challenges in the organization of the event. IFOAM - Organics International should revise its policy and implement learnings from the congresses in 2021 and 2024 to take into consideration the financial and capacity situation of the international office.

## Conclusion

The IAs appreciate the openness and hospitality of the IFOAM - Organics International office, the ED's Louise Lutikholt and Ravi R. Prasad as well as Thomas Cierpka and staff during the internal audits despite the difficult times the organization is in. IAs have made 32 recommendations during the 3 year term, as reported in the previous [World Board Term Report, page 34](#). Many of them have been taken into consideration, whilst also taking into account the available capacity in the international office.

# Statement of Income & Expenditures

**Statement of Income and Expenses for the Period  
from 1 January to 31 December of the year.**

€ x 1000)	Audited 2021	Audited 2022	Audited 2023*
<b>Grants</b>	4.136	2.729	
<b>Membership contributions (incl. Regional bodies)</b>	315	365	
<b>Donations</b>	0	0	
<b>Sales Revenue</b>	77	294	
<b>Other operating income</b>	401	543	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>4.929</b>	<b>3.931</b>	
<b>Expenses for project funding</b>	-2.622	-1.860	
<b>Personnel expenses</b>	-1.769	-1.332	
<b>Depreciation</b>	-15	-49	
<b>Other operating expenses/ administration/ taxes</b>	-621	-460	
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>-5.027</b>	<b>-3.701</b>	
<b>Profit/ Loss</b>	<b>-98</b>	<b>230</b>	

\* The External Financial Audit 2023 is not completed yet. It will be made available by separate email as soon as it has been finalised and at the GA Motion Bazaar/GA in Taiwan.

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Jan Deane  
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