

## Organic Aquaculture first time regulated at EU level

**Brussels (30/06/2009)** – After more than 1,5 years discussion the Standing Committee on Organic Farming decided yesterday late afternoon on implementing rules on organic aquaculture (1). The IFOAM EU Group (2) welcomes that Member States found a compromise to define for the first time ever EU wide rules for organic aquaculture but points out that further development is needed.

“To regulate organic aquaculture on the EU level is a success in itself as the issue was very complex and difficult to find agreement within the sector and Members States” says Christopher Stopes, President of the IFOAM EU Group. “We welcome that the EU has now finally set legal minimum criteria for this important sector of food production. This legislative act should particularly improve comparability in an extremely internationalised market with a wide variety of organic fin- and shellfish”

“The agreed EU aquaculture rules are a good starting point for the further development for organic aquaculture within the EU. Together with existing private standards and initiatives, it provides now the levelling for sustainable, finfish, shellfish and seaweed production and provides reliable orientation to the consumers” Marco Schlüter points out, Director of the Group. “However, we are aware that these rules come in when exceptionally diverse private and national standards are in place. Therefore we appreciate the transition period e.g. on fish densities for current operators until 2013 to give sufficient time to adapt to the latest situation.

“Furthermore, the anticipated review by the Commission on aquaculture rules by 2013 gives the opportunity for the required continuation on the regulation development. Therefore, the IFOAM EU Group urges the Commission to implement a research project to provide scientific evidence.” adds Andrzej Szeremeta, IFOAM EU Food Legislation Coordinator. “The IFOAM EU Group will initiate a debate among its sector to come up with a concrete proposal for further adjustments, e.g. regards sustainable seaweed practices and will strengthen the voice of the organic sector towards the EU institutions. ”

End (characters 2099)

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# Press Release

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements – EU Regional Group

## Notes

(1) From the beginning of the early nineties; organic aquaculture has been developed in EU on the basis of private standards, and, later on, national standards of a few Member States. On the basis of the new organic farming regulation no 834/2007 that included as new area organic aquaculture, the Standing Committee on Organic Farming decided on detailed implementing rules on organic aquaculture.

(2) The IFOAM EU Group represents over 300 member organisations of IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) in the EU-27, EFTA and the accession countries. Member organisations include: consumer, farmer and processor associations; research, education and advisory organisations; certification bodies and commercial organic companies.