

## Dear Reader, Dear Colleague,

The first large-scale international ISOFAR conference, embedded into the 15<sup>th</sup> IFOAM Organic World Congress, lies behind us and it was, all in all, very successful indeed! We are greatly indebted to IFOAM and NASAA, our cooperation partners in Adelaide.

Renowned referees had reviewed 160 scientific contributions, so-called short papers, which provided for an overall considerably high standard. All those members who unfortunately could not make it to Adelaide, and hence have not received a printed copy of the proceedings and the CD, can access the contributions for free in pdf-format through the ISOFAR webpage. Instructions for downloading the document are available upon e-mail request ([info@isofar.org](mailto:info@isofar.org)). A limited amount of printed copies at 28 is still available through ISOFAR's Bonn Office and the FiBL-Shop in Frick, Switzerland ([www.fibl.org/shop/index.php](http://www.fibl.org/shop/index.php)). Additional copies will also be handed to selected agricultural libraries and multipliers.

Board and Executive Board have been newly elected during the General Assembly, for further Information see also summary minutes and the short presentation of the Board Members in this newsletter. I am delighted to continue the setup of ISOFAR, even more so as I have a very reliable partner in Vice President Dr Urs Niggli. His insight into the global situation of Organic Agriculture in all its aspects, his knowledge of involved people and institutions and especially his accurate assessments of international developments are indispensable for our work. A warm welcome to the new Executive Board is also extended to Niels Halberg, Agroecologist at the Danish Institute of Agricultural Sciences, the new treasurer of ISOFAR. We highly appreciate his dynamic input.

The general assembly has also debated ISOFAR's future working structure and the board will map out more detailed plans on the basis of these proposals. The structure of ISOFAR will likely to be characterized by the following elements, which have already proven essential and formative.

- i. De-centralisation of activities of active members, assignment of ISOFAR representatives within the framework of ISOFAR statutes – including financial endowment and setting, acquisition of fund etc.
- ii. Applied research arises out of the regional structures, focusing on on-site solutions, and characterized by inter-, multi- and transdisciplinarity. The participation of all stakeholders in the genesis of knowledge and problem resolutions in this is indispensable.
- iii. The future international conferences of ISOFAR will predominantly function as an arena for exchange between scientists and the fostering of personal contacts in larger intervals (probably of three years as before). These conferences will be less characterized by the rendition of temporally limited lectures and the lack of



Newsletter No. 5, December 2005

opportunity for discussion, but will rather involve workshops and case study-demonstrations. We are currently thinking of one to three icebreaker speeches, which shall kick off work in the sections. Other section- or content-related contributions shall be displayed in well-prepared and thoroughly designed poster exhibitions, which will be subject to sufficient commentary and discussion.

- iv. Yet, ISOFAR's main responsibility will always reside in the periods between these major events. Workshops and symposia in the many regions of the world will mark the work of the scientists in and around ISOFAR just as future collaborations in research projects. It is delightful to witness the current successful planning work of the long-term experiments working group (LTE) in Adelaide for the forthcoming year in either Philadelphia, USA or Edinburgh, UK. Early next year, selected long-term experiments with regards to issues in Organic Agriculture will be published in an ISOFAR-edited reference book.
- v. In the future, ISOFAR members shall lend their expertise to all fields where it may be needed whilst at the same time bringing our organization to the fore. The office has developed a procedure to make expertise accessible through a system of networks and keywords which can be used by ISOFAR members. Please let me direct your attention to the related contribution in this newsletter on page 9.

Adelaide has also meant a caesura regarding ISOFAR personnel. Dr Helga Willer (FiBL) has thus far been a reliable contact for many members and has devoted much of her time to ISOFAR matters in addition to her numerous other projects. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks for her incredible efforts in the setup of ISOFAR. Without her often selfless input and dedication, our organization could not have developed the way it did. In the future, Helga will remain in charge of the ISOFAR website.

There have also been changes in our Bonn office: Anke Dunsche has been working in administration for ISOFAR since its foundation. As she began her studies she was only able to perform temporally limited duties and Christin Streichardt has successively taken over the organisation of proceedings contributions as well being in charge of member support. Both deserve our sincere thanks, as does Anja Schneider who, whenever possible, supports Anke and Christin. Dr. Daniel Neuhoff, who has especially taken responsibility for the new electronically based administration but also the organization of proceedings, has contributed numerous suggestions for increased efficiency in the future of the ISOFAR office's works. He will perform honorary managing duties for ISOFAR.

We are facing great tasks. It is good to know you on board!

Wishing all of you a very happy, healthy and rewarding New Year 2006 I remain

Yours

**Ulrich Köpke**

President ISOFAR

---

**Summary Minutes: ISOFAR General Assembly, Adelaide, September 24, 2005, full minutes available on our website: [www.isofar.org](http://www.isofar.org)**

U. Köpke gave a short report on ISOFAR's activities since its foundation, focussing on the realisation of the first scientific conference of the society held in collaboration with IFOAM and NASAA in Adelaide, South Australia, in September 2005. ISOFAR's contribution consisted in managing the scientific part of the IFOAM world congress, including a scientific review process and the publication of the Conference Proceedings 'Researching Sustainable Systems' (print run = 500). Authors present at the conference were able to receive a maximum of two copies per paper contributed, free of charge. In addition to the printed version, ISOFAR members will also be able to download the proceedings in portable document format (PDF) from the ISOFAR website ([www.isofar.org](http://www.isofar.org)). Approximately 30 selected elaborate papers are envisaged to be published in a journal.

It has further been pointed out that the realisation of the conference was predominantly ensured by the financial support and labour input of two institutions, the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture, (FIBL), Frick, Switzerland, in particular of Helga Willer and Urs Niggli and the Institute of Organic Agriculture (IOL), University of Bonn, Germany. ISOFAR is also greatly indebted to all the unnamed referees for revising all the papers, as well as to the section heads performing various activities, and the working group leaders.

Further ISOFAR activities include the establishment of several working groups, planning of further regional conferences as well as networks and research projects. These activities will require regional representatives in charge of establishing and maintaining contacts to research organisations including CGIAR'S (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research) interested in collaborating with ISOFAR and for defining and launching regional research initiatives.

ISOFAR currently unites over 320 members from about 35 countries.

**Financial report**

Vice President U. Niggli, replacing Treasurer Eric Sten Christensen, gave a short summary of the financial situation of the society. At the moment, (September 24, 2005) the Society disposes of capital amounting to 10.520 . Unpaid membership fees for 2004 and 2005 amount to approximately 17.000 and will be charged in late 2005. While the current major income sources fees and public donations, expenses were mainly related to travel costs for board meetings. The conference proceedings, however, will still have to be paid (app. 7000 ) and will result in a substantial depletion of the savings. The cash report has been

checked and approved by two appointed ISOFAR members, Hiltrud Nieberg and Joachim Raupp, both from Germany. A budget plan for the forthcoming period will be drafted by the Board and presented to the members within the next months. The GA without any dissenting vote accepted this procedure.

#### **Exoneration of the Board:**

Following the various reports, the GA without any dissenting vote exonerated the Board.

#### **Society management**

In order to facilitate communication, a member administration platform has been developed that will allow to reduce labour input for administration. Features of the programme will include automatic mailing of standard letters, including invoices and membership statistics for administrative purposes. In order to improve networking, all members will be invited to send a short CV including main research interests (keywords) to the ISOFAR secretary for further elaboration (see page 9 in this newsletter).

#### **Statute changes**

Some minor statute changes had to be carried out for legal reasons and were approved by the GA without any dissenting vote.

#### **Board elections**

43 members of the society were invited to elect a new board. A total of 17 candidates briefly introduced themselves to the GA or were introduced in case of absence. The following candidates were elected (37 = number of votes):

Niggli, U. (Switzerland)	37
Sohn, S.M. (Korea)	37
Köpke, U. (Germany)	34
Sseyewa, C. (Uganda)	34
Lockeretz, W.(USA)	28
Wynen, E. (Australia)	28
Ben Kheder, M. (Tunisia)	28
Halberg, N (Denmark)	27
Hamm, U. (Germany)	22
Lammerts-v. Bueren, E. (Netherlands)	21
Radics, L. (Hungary)	20
Sylvander, B. (France)	19

A new Executive Board has been elected by the Board Members (Urs Niggli was not able to attend the Board Meeting):

President: U. Köpke (6 / 1 abstention)

Vice-President: U. Niggli (7)

Treasurer: N. Halberg (6 / 1 abstention)

Minutes keeper: D. Neuhoff & N. Halberg

---

**The new ISOFAR Board elected on September 24, 2005 in Adelaide, South Australia, details including contact addresses and photos on our website.**

**Niels Halberg, Denmark**

He is a senior scientist in the Department of Agro-Ecology at the Danish Institute of Agricultural Sciences. He has more than 12 years of experience in the research and modelling of conventional and organic farming systems. Since the early 1990s, he has carried out on-farm studies on production and resource use in organic farms, including the modelling of environmental impacts. He has published papers on energy use and nutrient losses in organic and conventional farming systems, on the development and use of agri-environmental indicators and on Life Cycle Assessment targeted on optimising farm management and farming systems.

**Ulrich Hamm, Germany**

He studied agricultural economics at Hohenheim University, Stuttgart, Germany. After a Professorship for agricultural marketing in Neubrandenburg (1993-2003), he became Professor for Agricultural and Food Marketing at Kassel University in the Faculty of Organic Agricultural Sciences, the first faculty in Europe dedicated solely to OA. U. Hamm has been involved in market research in OA for over 25 years.

**Mohamed Ben Kheder, Tunisia**

He has been the Director of the Tunisian Technical Center of Organic Agriculture since 2000, and is currently Professor at the Horticultural Institute of Chatt Mariem at the University of Sousse, Tunisia. He completed his Ph. D. in physiology and breeding of vegetable crops at Cornell University (USA) between 1979 and 1983. His research includes activities on the variety adaptation of vegetables, fertilization, compost, and compost tea used as fertilizer and as a phyto-sanitary product. He is a member of many committees, including the Mediterranean Organic Agricultural Network.

**Ulrich Köpke, Germany**

He obtained his degrees in agricultural sciences from the University of Goettingen (Diploma 1974, Dr. sc. agr. 1979) and qualified as lecturer at the same University. After habilitation (agronomy and crop science) in 1987, he accepted an appointment as professor for Organic

Agriculture by the University of Bonn, where he founded the Institute of Organic Agriculture (IOL) in 1992. He received and denied two further calls from the Universities of Gießen (1989) and Goettingen (1992). Director and head of the Institute of Organic Agriculture (IOL) since 1992, he is actively involved in all aspects of environmentally, socially and economically sustainable agricultural research and development. Main agronomic research topics are: nutrient management and weed control in Organic Agriculture as well as environmental impacts of agriculture. Head of several interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary researcher groups on national and international level (EU) he serves in several national and international organizations and boards.

**Edith T. Lammerts van Bueren, Netherlands**

She holds a part-time chair at Wageningen University (NL) as professor in Organic Plant Breeding since March 2005. She is also senior scientist and leader for Organic Plant Breeding at the Louis Bolk Institute. The Louis Bolk Institute is the only private Research Institute in the Netherlands specialised in Organic Agriculture, founded in 1976, and is widely recognised for linking farmer's experiential knowledge and scientific innovation. In 2002, Lammerts van Bueren was awarded a PhD from Wageningen University on the basis of the research and development activities she had conducted at the Louis Bolk Institute over the previous fifteen years, together with organic farmers and seed companies. The title of the dissertation was 'Organic Plant Breeding: concepts and strategies'. Edith is co-founder and president of the European Consortium for Organic Plant Breeding, and leader of the Working Group Organic Plant breeding of EUCARPIA (European Association for Research on Plant breeding).

**William Lockeretz, US**

Since 1981, William Lockeretz has been at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University (Boston, USA), where he currently holds the rank of Professor. For its first 12 years he was editor of the American Journal of Alternative Agriculture, which he helped to found in 1986. He also is the editor or co-editor of 11 books on agriculture, most recently Animal Health and Welfare in Organic Agriculture, as well as Visions of American Agriculture and Environmentally Sound Agriculture. His work has been published in a wide variety of national and international journals, including Agronomy Journal, American Journal of Agricultural Economics, Land Economics, Rural Sociology, Science, Journal of Soil and Water Conservation, and Biological Agriculture and Horticulture. He is the senior author of Agricultural Research Alternatives. From 2000 to 2002 he served on the US Department of Agriculture's National Organic Standards Board. In 2003, he received the "Spirit of Organic" award from the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements.

**Urs Niggli, Switzerland**

He has been Director of the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL in Switzerland since 1990. From 1979 to 1989, he worked as a weed scientist in arable and horticultural

crops at Swiss federal research institutes in Zürich and Wädenswil. He was and is partner in various EU projects on Organic Agriculture, organised the 13th International Scientific Conference of IFOAM (Basel 2000) and co-edited the proceedings. He is lecturer for agroecology and organic farming at ETH Zurich, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology. He is member of several advisory and expert committees on agricultural research in Switzerland and Germany and is President of FiBL Germany (Frankfurt).

**László Radics, Hungary**

He is the Head of the Department of Ecological and Sustainable Production Systems at Corvinus University of Budapest. He obtained a MSc degree of the University of Agricultural Sciences, Gödöllő as an agricultural engineer in 1973. Hence he worked at the University of Gödöllő from 1975 until 1990, teaching soil tillage, weed control and plant cultivation while doing his research works in agro-ecological weed management. Since 1991 he is head of the department at his present workplace, since 2000 with his own Professorship. He introduced 'Organic farming' into the education at the University. Furthermore he is author of many scientific and popularising articles about non-chemical weed management and about organic farming in Hungarian and international journals.

**Sang Mok Sohn, Republic of South Korea**

He has completed his Ph D at the University of Göttingen/Germany and has been Professor at Dankook University since 1986. Since 1998 he is director of the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture' affiliated to Dankook University, Cheonan, Republic of Korea. He was President of ARNOA (Asian Research Network of Organic Agriculture) between 2001-2004.

**Charles Ssekya, Uganda**

He is a Senior Lecturer at Uganda Martyrs University and was Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture from 2000 to 2003. He has published many scientific papers on disease problems in vegetable growing, on bio control and IPM and has worked as African advisor and country coordinator of the Seeds for Africa Charitable Trust, UK. He was Chairman of the interim steering committee for Establishment of a Horticulture Research and a Development Network in Eastern, Southern and Central Africa from 1998 to 2000. He is member of the National Organic Agriculture Movement of Uganda which is affiliated to IFOAM, Board member of the Equator Valley Farm and on-farm research site of Uganda Martyrs University.

**Bertil Sylvander, France**

Bertil Sylvander is Research Director at the French National Institute for Agronomic Research (INRA Castanet Tolosan) in the Department of Economics. He is specialized in management of Quality Supply Chains in Europe, public policies and markets (Organic Farming and Food, Protected Designations of Origin, Farmhouse Products, etc.). Bertil Sylvander has been involved in those fields for several decades and has published reports and articles in a

variety of refereed journals and books focussing on agricultural economics and management. He is in charge of the French national research program on Organic Farming and of the national programme on geographical indications. He is currently co-ordinator for important research programmes in the framework of European Union.

**Els Wynen, Australia**

She is director of Eco Landuse Systems, a research organisation in Canberra, Australia. She has worked in various national and international institutions as an agronomist and agricultural economist, including FAO in Africa and Rome, ESCAP in Thailand, and UNCTAD in Geneva; the Bureau of Agricultural Economics (BAE) in Canberra, and Denmark, the Danish Association of Organic Agriculture, the UK Department for International Development (DFID). Her work has included many topics such as the economics of organic farms, food security, research priorities in Organic Farming, UN Soil Convention, and harmonisation/equivalence of organic standards and regulations in the world.

---

**Reports from the working group meetings in Adelaide****Working group LTE (long-term experiments)**

After several email contacts over the past 2 years, we used the conference in Adelaide to have a personal gathering for the first time. We had 2 meetings, about 2 hours each, with altogether 19 people from Europe, North America and Australia participating. The mailing list of the working group comprises 38 researchers from 14 countries, however, many of them were not able to attend the conference. Almost each participant in the group meeting is involved in a long-term experiment (LTE). Research work linked to some of the experiments has also been presented in 11 papers given in 2 sessions of the ISOFAR Conference. In our group meetings we had an intensive and lively discussion, showing that our experiences with and personal view on LTEs is rather similar in many respects, despite very different local situations. Of course, we all are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of LTEs, and all factors considered we deem them a useful tool of modern research in agronomy, soil development and many agroecological issues. We also pondered future activities of our group. We plan to collect information demonstrating the value of LTEs and to intensify the dialogue with different target groups (e.g. scientists, farmers, politicians, sponsors). We are currently producing a book containing more than a dozen examples of organic LTEs in different countries. Moreover, it is our common intention to identify and harmonize suitable research tools (parameters, data sets, static and dynamic systems) and analytical methods for our experiments. We agreed on keeping a close contact and to have another meeting in 2006 as a side-event of a conference that many of us attend anyway. Finally, it was a rewarding and stimulating experience to finally meet the colleagues in person.

**Joachim Raupp**, raupp@ibdf.de

### **Soil Fertility Section Meeting**

Launching an international symposium on soil fertility in Korea

Prof. Sang Mok Sohn, Head of the Soil Fertility Section of ISO FAR, proposes an ISO FAR conference on the Soil Fertility in Korea for 2007. The conference should be held for 3 days with different subtopics such as (1) soil fertility in paddy field, (2) soil fertility in greenhouse cultivation, (3) soil fertility in stockless farming (4) soil fertility in orchards and (5) soil fertility in vegetable cultivation. Prof. Sohn announced that he would also arrange a separate symposium for local farmers parallel to ISO FAR Conference on the Soil Fertility. The section head's idea to host the ISO FAR conference was approved by the section meeting. Further details will be discussed with responsible ISO FAR Board Members.

**San Mok Sohn**, smsohn@dku.edu

### **Workshop on „Organic farming policy and international trade“**

Organised by Prof. Dr. Ulrich Hamm, University of Kassel, Germany and Toralf Richter (on behalf of Dr. Matthias Stolze), FiBL, Switzerland

The workshop's main objective was to form a research group consisting of members from both developing countries and EU countries to launch a EU research project proposal. The focus of this planned research project is on

- how to develop a political framework in developing countries that makes exporting of organic products to the EU easier
- how to change the regulatory framework of the EU Reg. 2092/91 so that the third countries' access to the European is facilitated.

The workshop was successful as a group of researchers from three European and six developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America is now working on the research proposal for the EU Commission.

**Ulrich Hamm**, hamm@uni-kassel.de

---

### **Membership services**

One of the main objectives of ISO FAR is to support and facilitate future international research collaboration and networking. Therefore, a password-protected area of the ISO FAR

homepage will give access to relevant information to members only. To avoid misuse, the password will be updated regularly and communicated to the members.

The current structure of the member area already offers the possibility to download documents. In the future, it will include a voluntary short presentation of individual members (see 1). This procedure will allow members to search for potential partners on a so-called 'enhanced member list'.

### 1) Enhanced member list

The list will include voluntary information (key words only) on

- information on the institution including address and website
- main research areas (with specific expertise)
- areas of interest (without specific expertise)
- additionally, if wanted: memberships, activities, official functions, photo etc.

Instead of creating such a list, it may be referred to an existing website.

In order to support network establishment, the ISOFAR head office will offer a member linking service focused on specific subjects (see 2).

### 2) Systematic search for persons or problems

Principle: Members can send an e-mail request to the head office looking for scientists with particular expertise, for instance experience in using medicinal plants with anthelmintic effects or for researchers interested in disease management of cattles.

The head office will forward the request to all potentially interested members based on information drawn from the ISOFAR database. Therefore, every member has to send a key word list with the area of expertise and the area of interest to the Head Office for feeding the database.

#### What you have to do:

Send an e-mail to [info@isofar.org](mailto:info@isofar.org) with your individual:

- 1) Key word list: areas of expertise
- 2) Key word list: areas of interest
- 3) Enhanced member list (see 1)

The ISOFAR Head Office would greatly appreciate to receive the information as soon as possible.

**Daniel Neuhoff**, [d.neuhoff@uni-bonn.de](mailto:d.neuhoff@uni-bonn.de)

## Events

- **30 – 31 May 2006: Congress on European Organic Farming Research in Odense, Denmark**

In May 2006, researchers representing all aspects of European research in organic food and farming will present their work at a joint congress to be held in Denmark. The congress will combine public meetings as part of EU supported projects in collaboration with the biannual Danish congress, which usually attracts more than 600 participants. ISOFAR will take the opportunity to inform on its goals and activities. The ISOFAR board will have its first physical meeting since the GA in Adelaide.

<http://www.okologi-kongres.dk/uk/>

- **28 May – 1 June 2006: 3rd EPSO CONFERENCE 06 (European Plant Science Organisation); Visegrád, Hungary, 'Plant Dynamics: from Molecules to Ecosystems'**

<http://www.epsoweb.org/catalog/Conf2006.htm>

- **5-7 April 2006, Budapest, Hungary, 'Opening Channels of Communication between the Associated Candidate Countries and the EU in Ecological Farming'** ISOFAR'S President will give a key note speech entitled 'Future of Organic Farming in the united Europe'

<http://www.channel.uni-corvinus.hu/content.php?content.9>

- **18-20 November 2006, Edinburgh UK, COR 2006, Colloquium of Organic Researchers, 'What will Organic Farming deliver?'** The LTE working group will meet parallel to the colloquium.

<http://www.aab.org.uk/contentok.php?id=25&basket=wwsshowconfdets>

- **February 28 - March 2, 2006, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada: '1st International Organic Apple & Pear Symposium'**

<http://www.oacc.info/AppleSymposium/index.html>



### Newsletter Contact / ISOFAR Secretariat

International Society of Organic Agriculture Research (ISOFAR), c/o Institute of Organic Agriculture (IOL), Prof. Dr. Ulrich Köpke (President), Ms Christin Streichardt (Secretary), Katzenburgweg 3, D-53115 Bonn, Tel. +49 228 735616, Fax +49 228 735617, Dr. Daniel Neuhoff (managing duties) +49 228 732883, E-Mail [info@isofar.org](mailto:info@isofar.org), Homepage <http://www.isofar.org>

© 2005, International Society of Organic Agriculture Research;