

Three years of cooperation in the ERA-NET CORE Organic

presentation in Austria 13 September, 2007

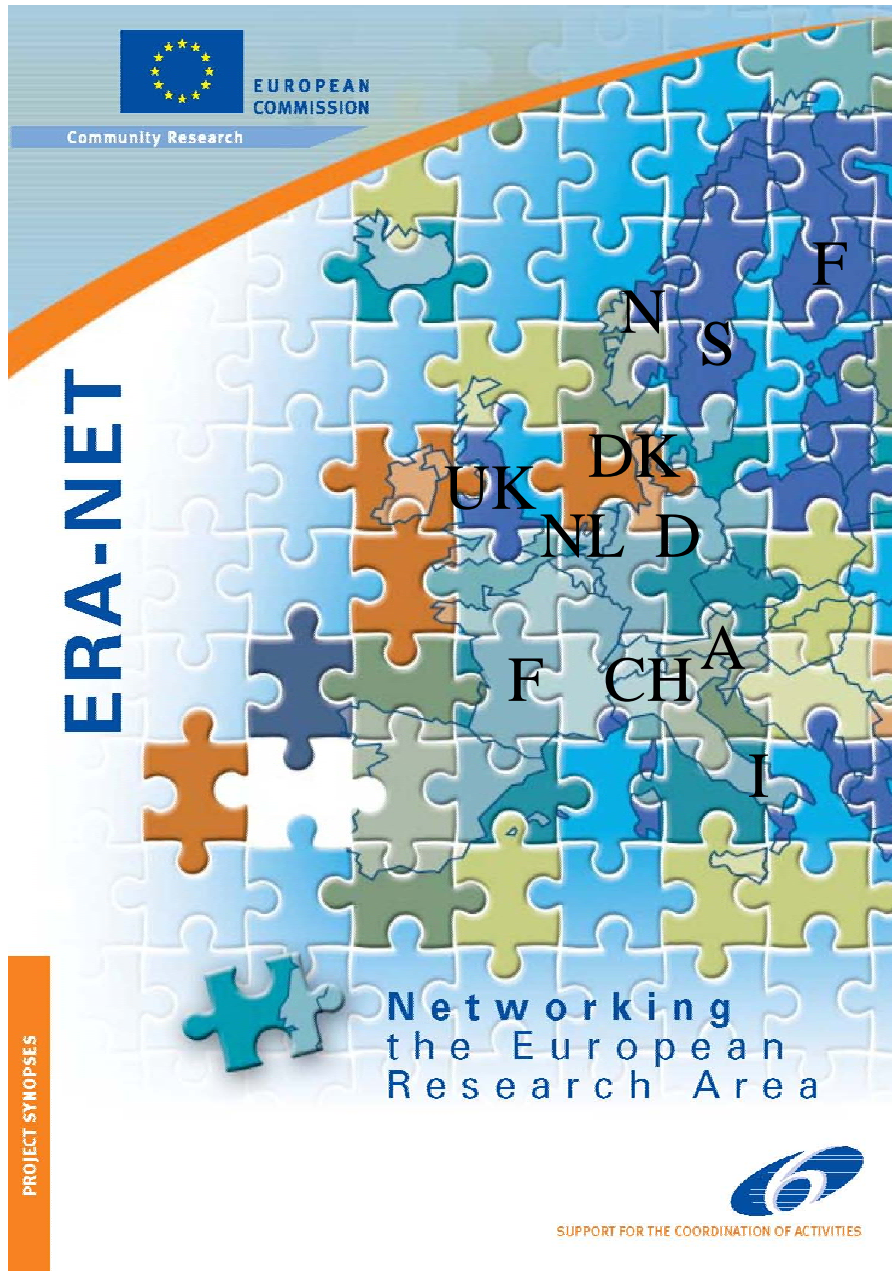
by

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Outline:

- Introduction of CORE Organic
- Results of communication and “mapping” (WP 2, 3 and 4)
- Results of the pilot call (WP 5, 6 and 7)
- Reflections and perspectives



**CORE Organic:
(Coordination of European
Transnational Research
in Organic Food and
Farming)**

**Cooperation of 13 national
partners in 11 Countries**

Start: 1st October 2004

Duration: 36 month

Budget: 1.200.000 €

Specific objectives of CORE Organic

1. Increase exchange of information and establishment of a common open web based archive
2. Coordination of existing research and integration of knowledge
3. Sharing and developing best practice for evaluating organic research
4. Identification and coordination of future research, joint pool of at least 3 million € per year

Structure of the project

1 Increased exchange of information and establishment of a common open web based archive

WP1 Coordination

WP2 Mediation and communication

WP3 Mapping of existing research programmes and facilities

2 Coordination of existing research and integration of knowledge

WP4 Coordination of existing research and integration of knowledge

3 Sharing and developing best practice for evaluating organic research

WP5 Sharing and developing best practice for evaluating organic research

4 Identification and coordination of future research

WP6 Identification and prioritising of future research topics

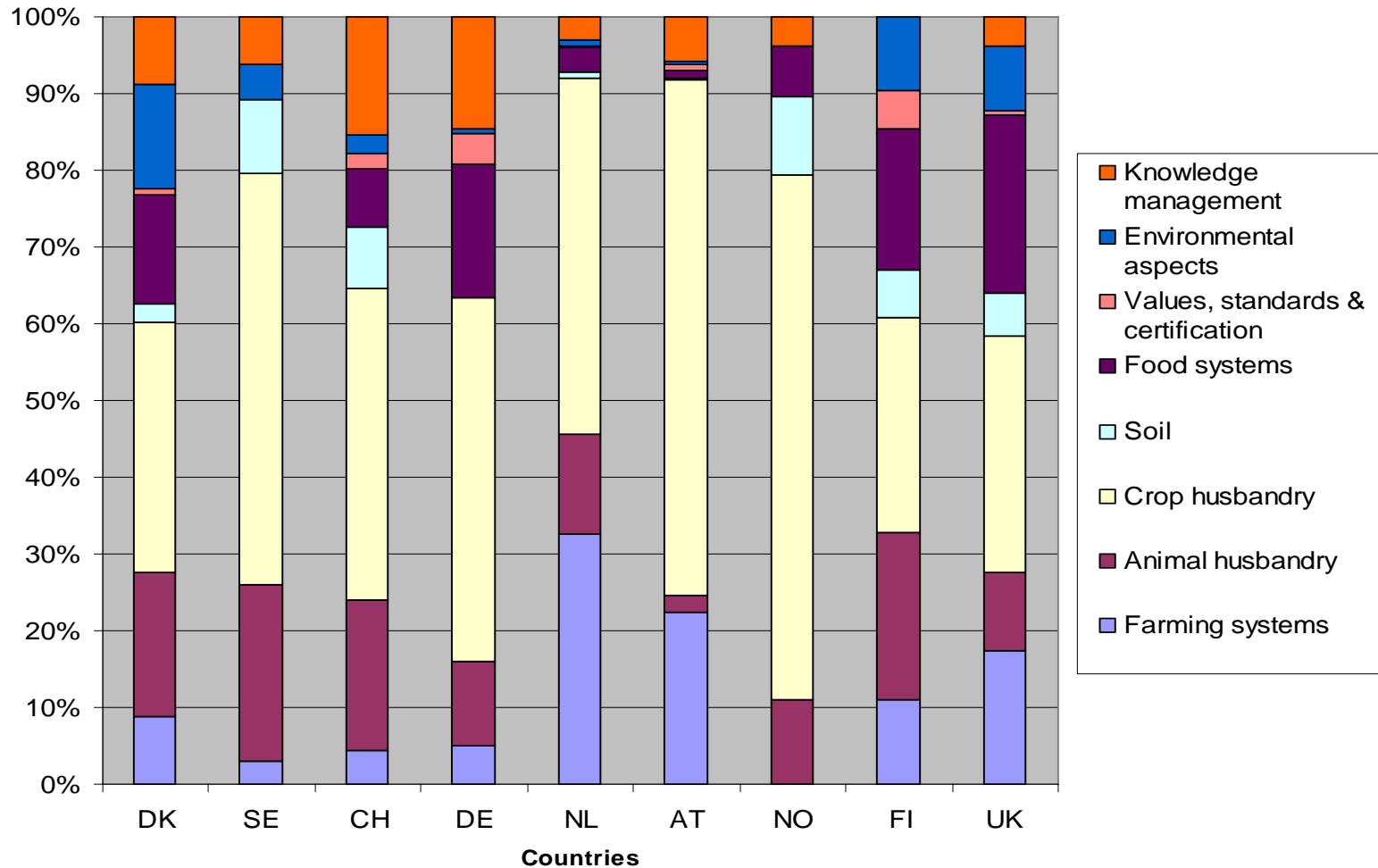
WP7 Coordination and implementation of future research topics with joint funding

WP2: CORE Organic webpage and database Organic Eprints

Daily visits to:	<u>Webpage</u>	<u>Organic Eprints</u>
October 2006	205	4219
July 2007	290	11192
August 2007	219	8063

Subscribers to CORE Organic news: total 1257 (research 507)

Distribution of financial input on 8 research subjects in 9 European Countries involved in CORE Organic, 2004 (WP3)



Facilities for research in organic livestock herds (WP4)

Facilities for livestock research are situated in most countries:

- 14 for **Dairy** (all countries)
- 3 for **Beef** (SE UK)
- 7 for **Pig** (AT, CH, DK, GE, SE)
- 7 for **Poultry** (DK, GE, NL, SE, UK)
- 5 for **Sheep** (GE, NO, SE, UK)

(Del 4.1: Nykänen & Canali, 2006)

Facilities for long term experiments in OF (WP4)

Experiments can be placed under several subject areas:

Subject area	Number of experiments	Countries
Farm nutrient management	23	AT, CH, DK, FI, GE, IT, NO, SE, UK
Crop combinations and interactions	20	DK, FI, FR, IT, SE, UK
Soil quality	13	AT, CH, FI, IT, UK, SE
Nutrient leaching	9	AT, CH, DK, FI, NO, SE
Composting and manuring	9	CH, DK, FI, GE, NO, IT, SE
Food / crop quality	9	CH, FR, IT, NO, SE
Nutrient turnover	6	CH, FR, IT, NO, SE
Breeding (Variety trials)	6	FR, IT, SE, UK
Weed management	6	DK, IT, SE
Crop health	3	FR, IT, SE
Cereals, pulses and oilseeds	26	CH, DK, FI, FR, IT, NO, SE, UK
Forage and pasture crops	17	CH, DK, FI, NO, SE, UK
Vegetables	11	GE, IT, NO, SE, UK
Fruit and berries	2	IT, FR

The comparison of organic and conventional farming has been a research topic in several countries. Experiments to study the conversion to organic farming are running in other countries.

(Del 4.1: Nykänen & Canali, 2006)

Joint pilot call, September 2006 :

1. Distributed/virtual pool, 9 million €
2. Duration of max 3 years, min. 3 participating countries
3. 1-stage evaluation procedure, based on peer review.

Topics:

- **Animal** disease and parasite management, including preventative health and improving therapies to reduce reliance on antibiotics.
- **Quality** of organic food – health and safety.
- Innovative **marketing** strategies. Identification of successful marketing methods. Local markets.

Identification and prioritising of new research topics (WP6) (based on written material and scores given at a workshop)

Seven topics reached a high score:

1. Animal disease and parasite management, including preventative health and improving therapies to reduce reliance on antibiotics.
2. The management and optimisation of nutrients within organic systems
3. Impact of organic farming on the environment (positive and negative), including biodiversity. Identification of agricultural practices that maintain biodiversity.
4. Quality of organic food – health and safety.
5. Innovative marketing strategies. Identification of successful marketing methods. Local markets.
6. Research on the effectiveness and scale of national policies and instruments.
7. Weeds, pests and diseases management.

Result of the joint call

	<u>Distribution of applicants on:</u>				<u>Total</u>
	<u>Animal</u>	<u>Quality</u>	<u>Marketing</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Mill €</u>
Total applicants	10	18	9	37	35
Above scien. threshold	6	7	4	17	19
Final selected	2	4	2	8	9

Scientific evaluation and final selection (WP5)

conclusions based on a questionnaire sent to applicants, the expert panel and key persons in CORE Organic

- 1. The rejected proposals showed insufficient scores regarding methodological criteria**
- 2. Highly prioritised proposals showed high scores of relevance**
- 3. The main challenge is how to handle the gap between scientific evaluation and the final selection.**

Suggestions:

- i) a more precise description of the call topics**
- ii) a two step evaluation procedure**
- iii) a commitment of all partners to fund all topics and**
- iv) a more transparent procedure defined beforehand**

Evaluation of the pilot call, strategic issues (WP7)

conclusions based on a questionnaire sent to GB-members

- 1. CORE Organic plays an important role in internationalisation, one reason is the ability to compare research funding mechanisms between countries.**
- 2. The majority of partners were motivated by general research aims such as improved research networks, scientific quality, coordination of knowledge and minimising duplication.**
- 3. By choosing a virtual common pot model all partners could participate in the call without administrative or legal barriers.**
- 4. Most GB members expressed the wish to continue also without ERA-NET funding.**

CHALLENGE ON COLLABORATIVE ISSUES

Very different culture for cooperation between countries, because of:

Different structures for research funding in organic F & F:

- UNIVERSITIES
- STATE R & D programmes
- PRIVATE RESEARCH INSTITUTES

Different players involved in organic funding programme decisions:

- Research councils/agencies (Research topics and selection is mainly set by research quality)
- Ministries (Research topics and selection is relevance and quality, high influence of stakeholders outside research communities)

National interests

Most funding bodies have a “national point of view” on research, not only in order to protect national scientist, but because there are other objectives than just producing scientific knowledge. And because research is also a matter of building up very specialized expertise.

Reflections of continuation of CORE Organic

Main objective could be:

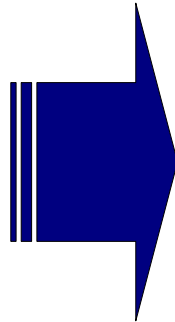
1. Monitor and evaluate the 8 projects in the pilot call
2. Continue and keep a high level of transnational communication and mediation
3. Include all new interested partners
4. Coordinate use of research facilities
5. Coordinate at least one more joint call. Make a proposal as an ERA NET plus (CORE Organic plus)?

New partners that have shown explicit interest in joining CORE Organic:

- Ministry of Science, Poland
- Ministry of Agriculture & Fishery, Flemish government, Belgium
- Ministry of Education and Research, Spain
- Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM)

Coordination of national Programmes

Nature shows us the way: Birds coordinating their efforts



71 % gain of efficiency

However do not forget that coordination is very time consuming:

- **Birds used many thousand of years to gain 71 %**
- **How much did CORE Organic manage in 3 years? – a lot !**