

**VII. WORLD ORGANIC FORUM SCHLOSS  
KIRCHBERG  
FUTURE FOOD SYSTEMS:  
Organic – regenerative - agroecological?  
02-07-2024**

Opening speech by Rudolf Bühler

Dear Friends and Colleagues, Guests from All Over the World!

You came from far away: from Australia, Canada, Africa, India, and elsewhere. A heartfelt welcome to all our valuable guests who took the effort to come here and join us in the idea of a better world. Yes, to fight for the survival of our mother earth!

This is what joins us and brings us together:

Not for more profit, as at the World Economic Forum in Davos – no! Here in the Farmers Castle of Kirchberg, we came together for exchange and to develop solutions for a sustainable and peaceful future, and I want to express:

**Peace with Nature—Peace among Humans!**

We need both, and we will experience our valuable guest speaker today: Mayor Arnado Rommel, a peace activist from Mindanao, Philippines, who has created and is the leader of the „Arms to Farms“ movement!

Here we have the movement

**„Bauern für den Frieden – Farmers for Peace“**

and are coming together every Thursday evening here in the Chapel of the Farmers Castle for an international prayer for peace among people and for the more than 30 military conflicts or wars at the time being.

But let's come to **„Peace with Nature“**:

Future food systems can only be viable if they respect nature and have peace with nature—not to destroy our environment, but feel and join with our hearts what our Lord has gifted to us humans.

Since 1992, we have introduced the system of „Organic Farming“ with strong rules and regulations, certifying it for preventing the abuse of pesticides and artificial fertilisers. But that's the point: organic is not only to avoid chemicals!

Organic Farming is or should lead to sustainable and climate friendly agricultural practice in the long run. When we consider the SDGs – the UN Sustainable Development Goals as the basis of sustainable agricultural and food systems, we will be aware that organic practices, as we are employing them now, are not really the long-term solutions.

Organic must be more. Organic has to meet further concepts, as we have been learning them for some time from the agroecological and regenerative movements.

Of course, we miss their commitments to the complete ban of chemical pesticides and fertilizers, as well as the use of GMOs and tropical feeds.

But we learn a lot of valuable practices, such as how to enrich our soil with humus, climate-resilient practices, prevention of erosion methods, improvement of bacterial life in the soil, and so on, with new practices such as agro-forestry, plough-less cultivation methods, and sustainable forests.

Here in the Farmers Castle, we had the founding conference of EARA last year and we are so proud of it. EARA means the **European Alliance for Regenerative Agriculture!**

This is a great and inspiring movement with a lot of enthusiastic and nature-committed young farmers and activists who are on track for an even more nature-based agricultural and food system, as it is practiced by the organic movement.

We are proud to be the hosts of the Regenerative Movement, and it is my personal wish to bring each other together, the organic with the regenerative!

As mentioned, foundation should be the common organic system, but we need further development towards organic plus regenerative; we need **Organic Plus!** This has to be our focus and aim for future solutions.

Again: certified organic as the basic model, including the valuable regenerative practices and agroecological solutions to come up with sustainable

**Future Food Systems as it is the topic of the  
VII World Organic Conference“.**

Finally I want to stress the climate farming issues as we are here at the Farmers Castle which has been also the host for the European Climate Farmers Conference several times. And here we are working hard with all our human resources on the topics of climate-friendly farming practices and their financial values.

We believe, that if climate issues become financially viable based on the basics of **true cost accounting**, which means to benefit climate-friendly methods and to charge polluters for their harmful and destroying practices,

it will lead on the long run to a sustainable and environmentally friendly economy, rather in the but also in national and international economies.

Since the Paris Climate Conference in 2015, along with the Green House Gas Protocol as follow-up, and finally the ISO 14064-ff regulations and the CSRD Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive as EU Law as a new frame for balancing economic activities upon their climate impacts,

there is a scope for pricing environmental values as well as regenerative and climate resilient methods and actions. As they can be certified now on the basis of ISO 14064 ff Regulations according to the Green House Gas Protocol, we believe in a systemic change towards environment-friendly and sustainable economies,

as pollution will be charged upon polluter payment principles and environmentally friendly actions and systems will become economically viable and a financial asset.

This is a great chance for all farmers of the world who are following organic methods and will include regenerative and climate resilient methods in the future. It will finally lead to **sustainable and environmentally friendly economies.**

This is our dream, and we are working hard on it. I am convinced that all of you, all of you who are here for this VIIth World Organic Forum and all of you who are participating remotely online, are having the same dream:

**we want to fight for a better world!  
Peace with nature—peace among mankind!  
Just let's do it!**

Finally, I want to thank:

- Our head of the academy, Prof. Dr. Theo Gottwald, for his valuable guidance and inputs,
- Josefine Herz as the main actor and the whole team
- All helpers and staff who provide us the frame for accommodation and with organic food:  
As I mentioned yesterday – organic and direct from our local farmers!

**Welcome all! The VIIth World Organic Forum is opened!**