

ORGANIC CAN SAVE THE WORLD: AT BIODIVERSITY PARK, EXPO AND BOLOGNAFIERE OPEN “THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIC FORUM”

Milan, 16th May 2015 – “Organic can save the planet, *il Biologico salvera il Pianeta*”: is the claim that opened the International Organic Forum today in the presence of **Vandana Shiva**, the Deputy Minister for Agriculture with a remit for organic farming, **Andrea Olivero**, the President of BolognaFiere **Duccio Campagnoli** and representatives of the national and international associations for organic agriculture, **FederBio**, the **Confederation of Italian Farmers (CIA)**, **IFOAM** (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) at **Biodiversity Park**, the themed area of EXPO created by BolognaFiere and dedicated to organic agriculture and agricultural biodiversity.

“On the occasion of the inauguration of the Organic Pavilion in Biodiversity Park, the only area in EXPO dedicated to organic farming, the launch of the Forum represents a clear attempt to respond EXPO’s theme of ‘Feeding the Planet, Energy For Life’”, explains **Duccio Campagnoli, President of BolognaFiere**. “The brainchild of Minister Martina, the project also boasts the participation of organizations for organic and biodynamic agriculture and is supported by BolognaFiere with its expertise of organizing SANA, the International Natural and Organic Exhibition. The aim of the forum is to bring together stakeholders in the organic sector, environmental groups, the voluntary sector, scientists, farmers and companies but also the public in order to demonstrate that the organic agricultural and nutritional model is an innovation capable of meeting the challenge outlined by the Universal Exhibition.

Vandana Shiva sowing seeds together with *Donne in Campo* (Women in the Fields) of the Confederation of Italian Farmers to inaugurate the Forum is a symbol of the scope and objectives that the discussions held throughout the duration of EXPO at Biodiversity Park hope to achieve. BolognaFiere is playing a key role in this project to support a growing and strategic sector for the Italian food production industry that is innovative and sustainable.”

“The choice of organic farming is the first essential step to restoring fertility to the ground. And its development on a global scale is the first, necessary step for launching a new circular economy”, stated **Vandana Shiva**, Indian ecologist and President of Navdanya International, inaugurating the Biodiversity Pavilion and presenting to the Organic Forum the Manifesto *Terra Viva* (Living Earth), a document drawn up by 20 experts from around the world. “The manifesto contains at least nine strategic points that reinforce the call for organic farming: a call that must be made also at EXPO.”

“In this phase,” continues the activist for the defence of biodiversity, “organic agriculture can provide the necessary responses to climate change, giving fertility back to the soil, storing greenhouse gases that are destroying not only the planet but also the survival of our cultures and, perhaps, even humanity itself. In addition to biodiversity and the cultivation of seeds, organic farming represents a treasure trove of opportunities to face global climate change. Organic means working in the countryside and creative work for young people, the antithesis of industrial agriculture. It means family farming, appreciating the value of the territory, recognising the role of women in production and in the preparation of food”:

In order to underline the centrality of the role of women in “feeding the planet”, following the meeting with stakeholders from the organic sector, together with *Donne in Campo*, a group of women from the Confederation of Italian Farmers, Vandana Shiva planted, in Biodiversity

Park, some local and traditional seeds including okra, pumpkin and melon from the Navdanya organization.

“IFOAM AGriBioMediterraneo, works to promote, develop and spread information and knowledge about organic agriculture with the aim of establishing and highlighting the strong relationship between this farming method and sustainable development.” Declared **Charikleia Minotou, President of IFOAM Agribiomediteraneo** – “IFOAM’s commitment is clear also through its contribution at Biodiversity Park EXPO to respond to the event’s stated challenge and to confirm that organic agriculture and nutrition are capable of feeding the planet.”

Paolo Carnemolla, President of FederBio, adds, “ Since 2012 we have been working together with BolognaFiere to bring organic to EXPO because the challenge of “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life” must include the innovative model of agriculture and nutrition that organic represents. The collaboration with BolognaFiere has enabled us to make space for organic within the only agriculture themed area at EXPO while counting on the participation of the main companies in the sector and the Ministry of Agriculture, creating a context that can become a genuine representation of the Italian model of farming and food production also for a growing population. For this reason we have chosen the location of Biodiversity Park, designed, created and managed by BolognaFiere at EXPO to make this the home of the International Organic Agriculture Forum that we are opening today together with all of the Italian associations for organic and biodynamic agriculture that have responded to the challenge laid down by Minister Martina for a great international event about organics at EXPO”.

SANA, the International Natural and Organic Exhibition organized by BolognaFiere, which will take place from the 12th to 15th September, will be a reference point for the Organic Forum, during which the world’s leading associations from the organic sector will come together to develop a common way forward on the theme of “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life”.