



INTRA-REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS AS A TOOL FOR ORGANIC FARMING DEVELOPMENT

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Content of presentation

- IFOAM mission and goals
- Technical barriers to organic trade: existing approaches and the challenge ahead
- IFOAM, FAO and UNCTAD cooperation projects to facilitate harmonization and equivalence
- The IFOAM Organic Guarantee System and its services to governments to facilitate organic trade

IFOAM is the international umbrella organization of organic agriculture movements worldwide



Mission

IFOAM's mission is leading, uniting and assisting the organic movement in its full diversity.

Vision

Our goal is the worldwide adoption of ecologically, socially and economically sound systems that are based on the Principles of Organic Agriculture.

Overall IFOAM Goals

- Sustainable organic production, Processing, trade and consumption
 - Organic practices and standards ensure full ecological, social and economic sustainability in all contexts
- Full coverage of organic production, processing, trade and consumption
 - Increase of organic production areas, production volumes and market shares
- Powerful movement
 - Full coverage of fully capable and enthusiastically motivated institutions to provide the services for the organic world and to drive organic development
- Organic lighthouse
 - Organic pioneers and organic solutions on all levels are a model and show ways to improve the organic and non organic world.
- Solutions for global challenges
 - Organic Agriculture provides universally accepted solutions for global challenges

Situation of Organic Standards & Technical Regulations

- 70 countries with organic regulations of some type
 - Some standards only, no controls implemented
 - Some, standards plus control of certification
 - Some regulate/control export but not domestic (e.g. Australia, India)
- + Private organic standards and labeling
- About 500 organic certification bodies worldwide, but little to no access to certification in some countries.
- Few equivalence agreements or other trade facilitating mechanisms except among major market actors
 - Bilateral equivalence arrangements were completed since 2009 between Canada-US, Canada-EU, US-EU, Canada-Switzerland, Canada-Costa Rica.
 - EU unilaterally recognizes 7 third countries
 - EU approves foreign certification schemes as equivalent to the EU scheme
 - Switzerland-EU equivalence is via a more general trade agreement on agriculture



It can be a frustrating journey through all the standards and regulations of the global organic marketplace.

Facilitating Regional Trade and Imports: existing approaches

Facilitating Regional Trade and Imports

There are currently five ways that a country which regulates its organic claim in the marketplace deal with imports.

1. direct accreditation of certification bodies operating in other countries based on compliance e.g. USDA NOP ;
2. direct approval of CBs operating in other countries and certifying to equivalent requirements.e.g. EU regulation Art. 33.3
3. unilateral recognition of another country's system as being equivalent EU regulation Art 33.2 Israel, Costa Rica, India etc ;
4. organic equivalence arrangements/agreements (essentially the same as 3, but bilateral e.g.Canada-US, EU-US ;
5. inclusion of mutual recognition of organic products in trade agreements e.g. Switzerland –EU part of Agreement on Agriculture

Facilitating Regional Trade and Imports

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Not feasible except for governments with large resources

e.g. directly accredits 54 foreign certification bodies involving site visitation and annual reporting

Facilitating Regional Trade and Imports

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2. direct approval of CBs operating in other countries and certifying to equivalent requirements e.g. EU regulation Art. 33.3

Not feasible except for governments with large resources

e.g. EU has directly approved more than 40 CB for equivalence certification conducted in third countries

Facilitating Regional Trade and Imports

- There are currently five ways that a country which regulates its organic claim in the marketplace deal with imports.

3. unilateral recognition of another country's system as being equivalent EU regulation Art 33.2 Israel, Costa Rica, India etc ;

This was the original approach, but inefficient and unlevel playing field.
Now being replaced by bilateral arrangements

Facilitating Regional Trade and Imports

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4. organic equivalence arrangements/agreements

(essentially the same as 3, but bilateral) e.g. Canada-US, EU-US, Switzerland-

Canada, Costa Rica-Canada ;

So far, have involved detailed negotiations including site visits. Not much more efficient than unilateral equivalence determinations although it levels the playing field among trading partners

Facilitating Regional Trade and Imports

- There are currently five ways that a country which regulates its organic claim in the marketplace deal with imports.

5. inclusion of mutual recognition of organic products in general trade agreements (bilateral or multilateral) Switzerland –EU part of Agreement on Agriculture the only one

GOMA study on this: conclusions: better to work on organic sector-specific regional arrangements/agreements than to insert equivalence agreements for organic products into general trade agreements because:

- Organic not a significant sector overall
- Those agreements are difficult to change (scope, etc)

Facilitating Regional Trade and Imports

- There are currently five ways that a country which regulates its organic claim in the marketplace deal with imports.

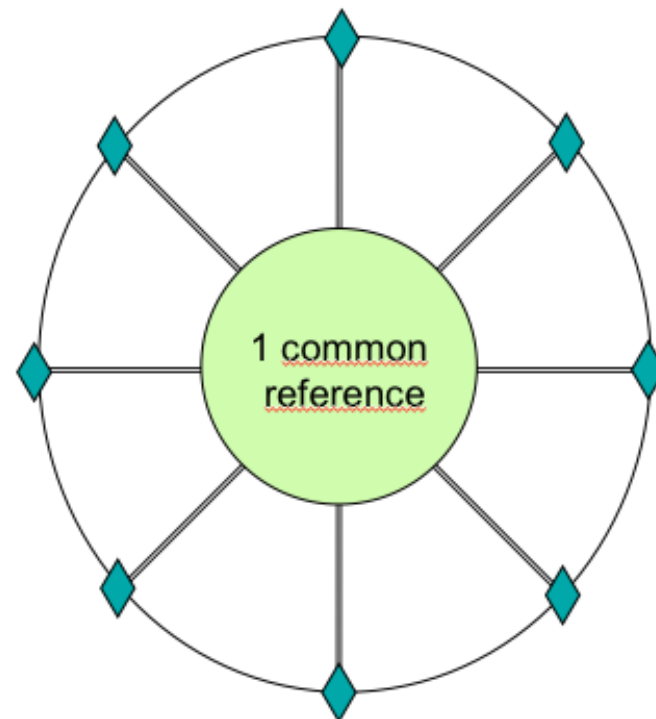
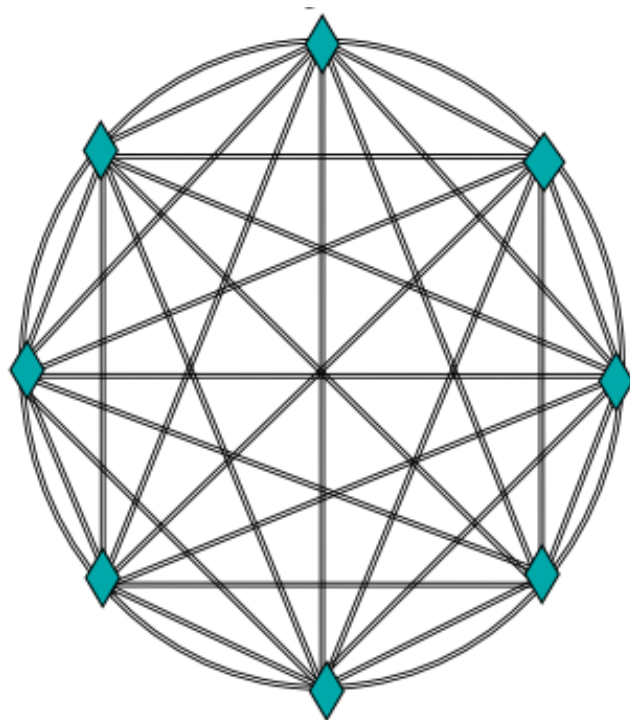
6. Multi-lateral organic trade agreements (under exploration in South East Asian Nations. Some interests expressed by individual countries such as Saudi Arabia)

IFOAM interested to support such an initiative

The challenge ahead

- Goal is complete removal of technical barriers to organic trade – this means full equivalence of at least all government regulations which are the baseline to trade.
- Currently 35 different organic regulations (70 countries).
- Full global equivalence through unilateral equivalence:
About 1200 equivalence approval needed.
- Full global equivalence through bilateral equivalence:
About 600 approval needed.

The multilateral equivalence solution



A multilateral approach can drastically reduce the number of assessments needed.

Gov Reg: 35 assessments needed instead of 1200 / 600.

Goal: Full coverage of organic production, processing, trade and consumption

Increase of organic production areas, production volumes and market shares

IFOAM has worked for more than 10 years on reducing barriers to the trade of organic products.

- We worked with two UN partners, FAO and UNCTAD in two sequential projects:
 - International Task Force on Harmonization and Equivalence in Organic Agriculture (ITF) from 2002-2008
 - Global Organic Market Access (GOMA) from 2009-2012
- IFOAM also offers services from its Organic Guarantee System which facilitate equivalence assessments and approval of imported organic products.

The IFOAM, FAO and UNCTAD cooperation projects to facilitate H&E



The ITF

International Task Force on
Harmonization and Equivalence in
Organic Agriculture (ITF)



- Convened by FAO, IFOAM and UNCTAD
from 2002-2008
- Public-Private Cooperation
29 countries
7 intergovernmental organizations
27 civil society/private sector
representatives



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Standards development should be based on international standards and standards guidance ([IFOAM](#) and/or [Codex Alimentarius](#)), although regional variations should be respected.
- Equivalence: Facilitate equivalence of organic standards using a standard process and criteria.
- Governments should recognize foreign organic certification based on an international common denominator of performance requirements.
- Promote other private-government cooperation, e.g. use private sector systems and services to facilitate recognition.

ITF Results

Tools

ITF produced two practical tools for assessing equivalence of organic standards and certification systems

For Standards:

Equitool and its annex:
Common Objectives and Requirements for
Organic Standards (COROS)

For Conformity
Assessment:

International Requirements for Organic
Certification Bodies (IROCB)

GOMA

Global Organic Market Access (GOMA)



- Project implemented by FAO, IFOAM and UNCTAD from 2009-2012
- Purpose was to:
 - promote harmonization and equivalence;
 - implement the ITF results
 - assist at region and country level on harmonization and equivalence

www.goma-organic.org

The GOMA outcome

Global Organic Market Access (GOMA)



- GOMA convened a Working Group in East, South-East and South Asia aimed at developing a recognition system for organic standards and conformity assessment among countries. The recognition model employed the ITF Tools for Equivalence, especially COROS. The work is now continuing through ASEAN, which is developing a harmonized organic standard.
- Conclusion: The ITF/GOMA tools can be a valuable basis for establishing a regional system of recognition

A new project to continue supporting regional H&E



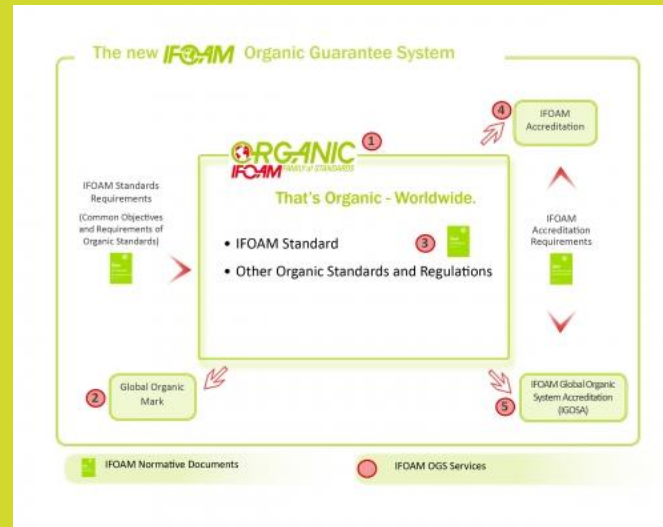
A Platform of **International Dialogue**
on **Voluntary Sustainability Standards**



The facilitation of regional initiatives for harmonization and equivalence in the organic sector, started by GOMA, is continuing in the new United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards.

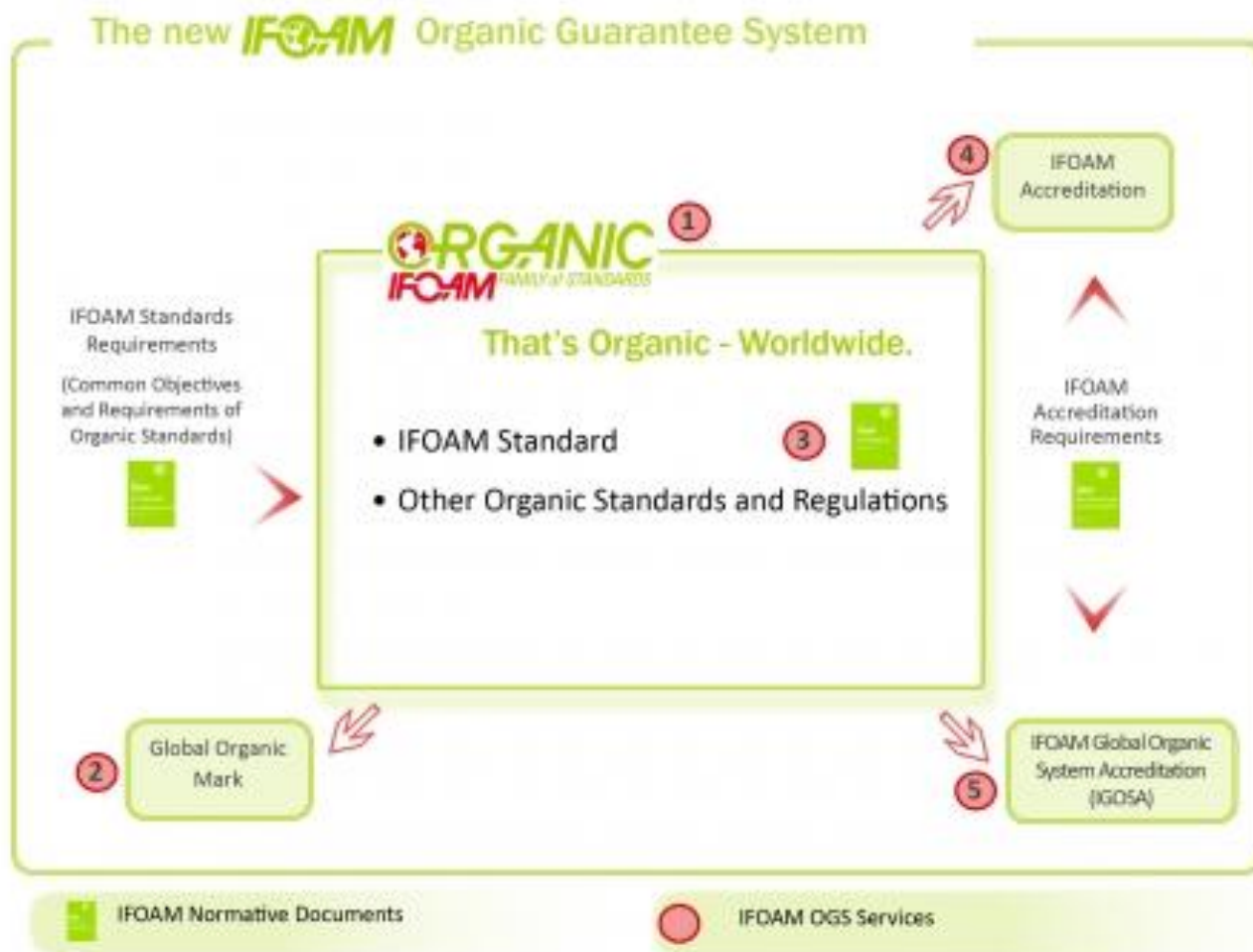
The work continues in the Organic Track of a UNFSS Working Group on Enhancing Interoperability of Sustainability Standards.

The IFOAM Organic Guarantee System



services to governments to facilitate organic trade

The IFOAM OGS



The IFOAM Family of Standards as the tool for global multilateral equivalence



That's Organic - Worldwide.



GLOBAL
IFOAM IFOAM Standard
International Standard for Forest Garden Products (IFG)



AFRICA
Tunisia Organic Regulation
East African Organic Products Standard
EnCert Organic Standards, Kenya
Basic Norms of Organic Agriculture in Senegal, Senegal
Africa Organic Standards, South Africa
Sipwano Organic Standards, South Africa
Organic Standards for Tanzania, Tanzania
Uganda Organic Standard, Uganda
Zimbabwe Standard for Organic Farming, Zimbabwe



ASIA
Saudi Arabia Organic Regulation
China Organic Regulation
India Organic Regulation
Israel Organic Regulation



EUROPE
Japan Organic Regulation
OFDC Organic Certification Standard, China
Hong Kong Organic Resource Center Standard, Hong Kong
IBCAA Organic Agriculture Standard, Israel
Japan Organic & Natural Foods Association Organic Standard, Japan
MASIPAG Organic Standards, The Philippines
CORU Organic Standard, South Korea
KORAL LLC International Standards, South Korea
GDA International Standards, South Korea
ACT Basic Standard, Thailand
Vietnam PGS Standards, Vietnam



OCEANIA
National Standard for Organic and Bio-Dynamic Produce, Australia
New Zealand Organic Export Regulation
Pacific Organic Standard, Pacific Community
Australian Certified Organic Standard, Australia
NAAO Organic Standard, Australia
Asia-Quality Organic Standard, New Zealand
BioGro Organic Standards, New Zealand



SOUTH AMERICA
Argentine Organic Regulation
Costa Rica Organic Regulation
Argentina Organic Standard, Argentina
LETS IFOAM Accredited Standard, Argentina



NORTH AMERICA
GIA Organic Standards, Argentina
Bolcent Organic Standard for Production and Handling, Bolivia
Guidelines for the ISO Quality Organic Standard, Brazil
Canada Organic Regulation
USA Organic Regulation
DOAM Organic Standards, Dominica
Red Mexicana de Tianguis y Mercados Organicos' Standard, Mexico
CCOF Normativo Standard, USA
Farm Verified Organic Requirements Manual, USA
NOFA Standards for Organic Land Care, USA
QCS Inc. Program Standard Manual, USA

The FAMILY OF STANDARDS contains all standards officially endorsed as organic by the Organic Movement, based on their equivalence with the Common Objectives and Requirements of Organic Standards. Both private standards and government regulations are admissible.

www.ifoam.org/ops

Note: Applicant standards are marked in grey.
Family Standards Frame: August 14, 2012.
Click on each standard to see more details.

Multilateral equivalence through the IFOAM FoS

- GOMA and IFOAM have developed the common reference: the COROS.
- IFOAM undertaking (or validating) all equivalence assessments of private standards & technical regulations against the COROS based on:
 - The Equitool approach (identifying negative and positive variations to the COROS)
 - IFOAM policies and procedures, involving committee of experts and transparent process, open for public comments.

Equivalence matrix template for the Equivalence assessment of standards against the Common Objectives and Requirements of Organic Standards

Non objectives and detailed requirements to the COROS	Standard Objective (Yes/No/Not applicable)	Comments for the assessment (Yes/No/Not applicable)	Standard Objective (Yes/No/Not applicable)	Comments for the assessment (Yes/No/Not applicable)
1. The standard covers the production of organic products.	Yes		2. The standard covers the processing of organic products.	Yes
2. The standard covers the distribution of organic products.	Yes		3. The standard covers the labeling of organic products.	Yes
3. The standard covers the marketing of organic products.	Yes		4. The standard covers the storage of organic products.	Yes
4. The standard covers the transport of organic products.	Yes		5. The standard covers the export of organic products.	Yes
5. The standard covers the import of organic products.	Yes		6. The standard covers the use of organic products.	Yes
6. The standard covers the disposal of organic products.	Yes		7. The standard covers the recycling of organic products.	Yes
7. The standard covers the composting of organic products.	Yes		8. The standard covers the use of organic products in food.	Yes
8. The standard covers the use of organic products in non-food.	Yes		9. The standard covers the use of organic products in medicine.	Yes
9. The standard covers the use of organic products in cosmetics.	Yes		10. The standard covers the use of organic products in other sectors.	Yes

Equivalence assessment of the DOAM Standards for Organic Agriculture against the Common Objectives and Requirements of Organic Standards

Assessment summary sheet

Note: the aspect of record keeping (Organic System Plan content) is not included in the scope of this assessment as it is not in the scope of the COROS. The DOAM standard however includes such requirements. The DOAM standards also include requirements for mushroom production, which are not included in the scope of this assessment. The DOAM Standards also contain 2 sections under construction: "Section F Standards for Organic Input Production" and "Section G Handling of Organic Produce from Farm Gate through to Customer". These are not included in the scope of this assessment.

	Yes	No	Comment
Does the standard respect the Principles of Organic Agriculture?	X	X	The social justice objective is not addressed, but this is explained by the fact that the general Dominican labour laws cover the requirements in COROS and are enforced, and the fact that the standard is only applied in Dominica. Other objectives are well covered.
Does the standard sufficiently cover all 10 COROS objectives? If no, which objectives are not covered or not sufficiently covered?	X		One problem is that the crop protection list is lacking allowed natural substances. The case of inert is not extremely clear in the standard but apparently they are also subject to the lists.
Does the entire standard clearly distinguish organic systems from conventional systems?	X		Overall, the variations are acceptable. Half of the negative variations are justified. The other half is compensated.
Overall, are the lists of approved substances in the standard equivalent to the lists in the reference international standard?	X	X	Non-organic agricultural ingredients are not allowed. A number of positive variations in the livestock standards (among others, it is very restrictive on which animal drugs can be used (short positive list). Objective 1, 3 and 8 concentrate the highest number of variations.
Does acceptance of the standard prejudice consumer trust in organic or the reputation of the body accepting the standard?		X	The conversion periods (both for land and animals), animal feed, the small allowance of chelated nitrate, the nanotech issue, a few gaps in the beekeeping section. A number of language incertainties and lack of understanding of the typical role of the appendices and some technical definitions in the standard.
What are the main areas of important positive variations in the standard?			
What are the main areas of important unjustified negative variations in the standard?			
IS THE STANDARD EQUIVALENT TO THE COROS?	X		

That's Organic - Worldwide.



GLOBAL



IFOAM Standard

International Standard for Forest Garden Products (FGP)



AFRICA

Tunisia Organic Regulation

East African Organic Products Standard

EnCert Organic Standards, Kenya

Basic Norms of Organic Agriculture in Senegal, Senegal

Afrisco Organic Standards, South Africa

Siyavuna Organic Standards, South Africa

Organic Standards for Tancert, Tanzania

Uganda Organic Standard, Uganda

Zimbabwe Standard for Organic Farming, Zimbabwe



ASIA

Asian Regional Organic Standard



Saudi Arabia Organic Regulation

China Organic Regulation

India Organic Regulation

Israel Organic Regulation

Japan Organic Regulation

OFDC Organic Certification Standard, China

HKORC Organic Standard, Hong Kong

Biocert India Standards, India

IBOAA Organic Agriculture Standard, Israel

Japan Organic & Natural Foods Association Organic Standard, Japan

MASIPAG Organic Standards, The Philippines

CONU Organic Standard, South Korea

DCOK, LLC International Standards, South Korea

GOAA International Standards, South Korea

ACT Basic Standard, Thailand

Vietnam PGS Standards, Vietnam



OCEANIA

National Standard for Organic and Bio-Dynamic Produce, Australia

New Zealand Organic Export Regulation

Pacific Organic Standard, Pacific Community

Australian Certified Organic Standard, Australia

NASAA Organic Standard, Australia

AsureQuality Organic Standard, New Zealand

BioGro Organic Standards, New Zealand



EUROPE

EU Organic Regulation

Switzerland Organic Regulation

Turkey Organic Regulation



Bio Suisse Standards, Switzerland

Biocyclic Standards, Cyprus

Nature & Progrès Standards, France

Ecoland Standards for Organic Agriculture and Food Production, Germany

Gäa Private Standards, Germany

Naturland Standards, Germany

CCPB Global Standard, Italy

Italian Organic Standard, Italy

Krav Standards, Sweden



THE AMERICAS

Argentina Organic Regulation

Canada Organic Regulation

Costa Rica Organic Regulation

USA Organic Regulation

Argencert Organic Standard, Argentina

OIA Organic Standards, Argentina

DOAM Organic Standards, Dominica

Red Mexicana de Tianguis y Mercados Orgánicos' Standard, Mexico

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www.ifoam.org/ogs

Note: Applicant standards are marked in grey.

Family Standards Frame: August 26, 2013.

Click on each standard to see more details.

Legitimacy of the IFOAM process

- Principle of the Family and COROS approved by the sector.
- ITF recommendation that “An independent (impartial) assessment of equivalence increases the credibility of the process.” → governments encouraged to delegate the technical assessment to independent experts (IFOAM)
- IFOAM ensures consistency, fairness and transparency in the process of global equivalence assessments.

How governments can use the IFOAM FoS:

- Officially endorse the IFOAM Family of Standards = delegate assessment and decision of equivalence to IFOAM (e.g. Saudi Arabia).
- Use IFOAM equivalence assessment reports = delegate assessments to IFOAM but retain final decision (e.g. ASEAN countries).
- Come together with other governments to negotiate bi or multi-lateral equivalence agreements on the basis of approval of their regulations in the IFOAM Family of Standards.

Benefits for governments

- Handling of imports much easier, much faster: good way to support the development of organic agriculture.
- Free up staff resources for other much needed areas of work, such as market surveillance, acting on fraud complaints, promotion and support activities.
- Reliance on IFOAM expertise and FAO-IFAOM-UNCTAD-approved COROS means credibility of the approach towards other governments and own consumers.
- Detailed feedback on own regulation as input for further improvements and global harmonization.

The IFOAM OGS tools to support recognition of conformity assessment systems



Available tools

- Currently no “Family of recognized control systems”, but:
- 2 international references available on organic certification competence:
 - The IROCB (developed by ITF)
 - The IFOAM Accreditation Requirements
- An existing international organic accreditation program (with 2 sub-categories): the IFOAM Accreditation and the IFOAM Global Organic System Accreditation.

But currently no CB based in Balkan countries have this accreditation.

The IFOAM and Global Organic System Accreditations

- Both based on the IFOAM Accreditation Requirements
- Difference between IFOAM Accreditation and Global Organic System Accreditation (GOSA) is about the standards used.
 - IFOAM Accreditation if they use the IFOAM Standard or a compliant standard.
 - Global Organic System Accreditation if they use any standard approved as part of the IFOAM Family of Standards.
- Both accreditations are conducted by the IOAS and subject to accreditation fees.

Benefits for certification bodies

- Highest proof of performance for organic CBs globally.
- Highest sign of commitment to the international organic movement and to the vision of IFOAM.
- Accreditation criteria are uniquely tailored to the requirements of organic certification - and therefore contribute to continuous improvement of a CB.
- IOAS responsiveness is unmatched as an AB.
- Clients get right to use the logos on their products:

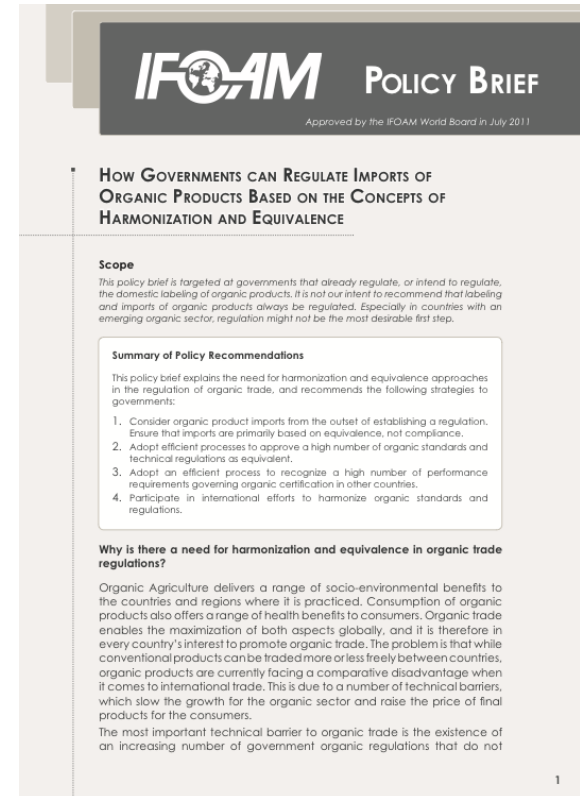


How governments can use the IFOAM APs

- Use the IFOAM APs as an alternative to developing their own organic national AP.
- Require accreditation to an IFOAM Program for recognition of conformity assessments in other countries (equivalence).

IFOAM Policy Brief on Imports

- “How Governments can regulate Imports of organic products Based on the concepts of Harmonization and equivalence”
- Scope is for countries which regulate imports.
- Detailed recommendations and proposed language examples for regulating imports based on equivalence approach.



Thank you for your attention!

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