

POSITION PAPER

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements – EU Regional Group

Initial proposal for the seaweed implementing rules for Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007

20th June 2008

Chapter 1

Specific control requirements for the collection of wild seaweed

In addition to the control requirements of Article 70 of the Agriculture implementing rules (AGRI/61085 Version 02.06.2008) the following rules shall apply to the collection of wild seaweeds.

Control Arrangements

Article 1

The operator shall provide the following information

- a) species to be harvested
- b) history of harvesting activity for each species in beds;
- c) harvest estimate (volumes) for current season;
- d) localisation of sources of possible pollution (point and non-point) for harvest beds;
- e) definition of the sustainable annual yield for each bed

Article 2

With particular reference to Article 1, collecting sites shall be adequately mapped, clearly indicating each harvesting bed with a number and/or name as well as the specific surface.

Article 3

All other control requirements mentioned in art. 63 – 67 of NIROF version 02.06.08 shall apply to seaweed farming as well as to wild collection. In particular, there shall be one annual physical inspection of the harvest management unity as well as at least one seaweed production site (bed) and one harvester per year.

Article 4

In addition to Article 13, 1(a) of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007, operators shall be able to demonstrate through at least one (preferably all) of the following parameters that the harvesting location is not adversely affected by any sources of pollution:

- a) Distance from source of contamination, considered by hydrographical data (tides, currents, etc.)
- b) water quality testing data, especially those parameters of directive (EC) No 2006/113 affecting the quality of seaweed (e.g. heavy metals,

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oil (hydrocarbures, etc.). Water quality has to be considered by the hydrographical data (tides, currents, etc.)

[Note – this article was not agreed by all parties]

Conversion

Article 5

The conversion period for a seaweed harvesting site shall be 12 months. Where it can be demonstrated that Article 3 has been satisfied for the previous 12-month period, and that there is no relevant source of contamination left, a conversion period shall not apply.

Harvesting

Article 6

Seaweed shall be harvested by using methods, tools and equipments that are designed to assure future vitality of the target species and to minimize damage to substrate, juvenile seaweed and non-target species,

Mechanical harvesting shall be limited to the following species: *Laminaria digitata*, *Laminaria hyperborean*, *Laminaria Saccharina*, *Ascophyllum nodosum*, *Ulva spp.*

If mechanical equipment, such as especially automatically driven engines are used, it has to be assured that:

- a) The collection method is selective: only the species to be commercialized shall be collected.
- b) That natural resource and biodiversity are preserved.

[Note – this article was not agreed by all parties.

The list of species, which mechanical harvesting is allowed, is not finalized yet. According selectiveness of mechanical harvesting, an issue of small epiphytes was not agreed.]

Article 7

The harvesting method shall allow the plant to regenerate. In principle, only the parts of the plant needed for commercialisation shall be harvested.

Article 8

Harvesting shall be made only by specially trained harvesters. There shall be written contracts between, the harvest manager and the harvesters.

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Sustainability

Article 9

Harvesting or gathering the product shall not exceed the sustainable yield of the ecosystem, or threaten the existence of plant or animal species.

Article 10

For each species listed under Article 1, measures taken to ensure that plants can regenerate, such as harvest technique, minimum plant sizes, ages, reproductive cycles or size of remaining plant shall be specified.

Article 11

If seaweed is harvested from a shared or common harvest area, evidence must be provided that the total harvest complies with these rules.

Article 12

With respect to Article 1,b) and c), these records must provide evidence of sustainable management and of no long-term impact on the harvesting areas.

Chapter 2 Seaweed Culture

Article 13

For farmed seaweed, the conversion period shall be 12 months and at least one production cycle of the seaweed.

Article 14

Seaweed culture shall utilise nutrients naturally occurring in the aquatic environment, or from the culture of organic fish. Where this is not possible, Article 13, 2(c) of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 shall apply.

Article 15

Culture density or operational intensity shall maintain the integrity of the aquatic environment, and not exceed its carrying capacity.

Article 16

Where external nutrient sources are used in enclosed systems, nutrient levels in the effluent water shall be the same, or lower, than the inflowing water.

Article 17

The use of carbon dioxide is not permitted in organic seaweed culture.

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Article 18

Collection of wild spawning stock, or wild juvenile seaweed must comply with Chapter 1 on wild harvesting of seaweed.

Article 19

Hatchery production of seaweed spores shall not use any products not otherwise permitted in this regulation.

[Note – this article requires a preparation of list of allowed substances to be included in annexes.]

Article 20

Heating or cooling of water shall be to a maximum 5°C deviation from ambient and shall only be permitted in hatcheries.

Article 21

Artificial light shall only be permitted in hatcheries.

Article 22

Open-water on-growing areas for seaweed shall comply with Article 4 above.

Article 23

Antifoulants are not permitted. Fouling organisms must be removed by physical means.

Article 24

The visual impact of open-water culture of shellfish shall be minimised.

Article 25

Ropes and other equipment used for growing seaweed shall be reused or recycled wherever possible.

Chapter 3 **Post-harvest handling and processing**

Article 26

Handling, processing and packaging of organic seaweed shall comply with Chapter 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 and Chapter 3 of the associated implementing rules (AGRI/61085 Version 02.06.2008).

Article 27

The flushing of freshly harvested seaweed shall be made with seawater in case that the final produce is fresh seaweed.

If the final product is dehydrated seaweed, fresh drinking water may also be allowed for flushing as well.



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Article 28

Dehydrating seaweed shall be made by using procedures not altering the product. Especially, direct flames shall be prohibited. If ropes or other equipment is used (e.g. for sun-drying), it has to be without any anti-fouling-treatment.