



25th February 2005

Dear IFOAM Member, IFOAM-ACB, IOAS,

On behalf of the Norms Management Committee (NMC), I am sending you the

1. **Final Revision Draft of the 2002 IFOAM Accreditation Criteria (IAC),**
2. **Criteria Committee (CC) responses (Commentary)** to the stakeholder comments on the Second Revision Draft of the IAC and
3. **CC responses (Commentary)** to the stakeholder comments on the Second Revision Draft of the Explanatory Notes of the IAC (former Guidance Notes).

According to IFOAM Policy 43 "Policy and Procedures for Revision of the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria," IFOAM members, the ACB's, and the IOAS can react with **motions on the Final Revision Draft of the IAC** to the NMC within 60 days of final distribution/notification.

You are now invited to make motions on the Final Revision Draft of the IAC.

The deadline for motions is the 26th of April 2005.

If you are not the person in your organization who should make the motions, then please give this entire package to the appropriate person. Thank you!

The Final Revision Draft document shows all changes from the 2002 version of the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria. The Final Revision Draft and the Compilation of Comments & CC Responses will also be available on the IFOAM website, www.ifoam.org.

IMPORTANT! – Instructions for Motions – Please read carefully –

Motions are a chance for the eligible parties to request specific language changes to the IAC revisions before the final decision is taken by the World Board. In general, it is expected that those parties who make motions also participated in the prior two Comment periods.

When preparing and submitting motions, please do the following:

- **MAKE MOTIONS ONLY ON TEXT THAT HAS BEEN REVISED.** Motions on any language other than that which is currently in revision **will not be accepted**
- **Present motions as changes to the language** of the Final Revision Draft. Other types of motions **will not be accepted.**
- **Provide a brief rationale** for why you are requesting the change. If you are requesting a change, and have not participated in the prior comment processes, please explain why you are requesting a change at this stage of the process.
- **Identify your organization**
- **Confirm that your organization is an IFOAM member** in good standing.
- **Identify your organization's contact person**, and his/her email address and phone number.
- **Send motions** to OGS Coordinator, Matthias Fecht, M.Fecht@ifoam.org, or mail to him at the Head Office, Charles-de-Gaulle Str. 5, D-53113, Bonn, Germany.
- It is strongly **preferred** that motions are **submitted electronically** in MS Word.

IFOAM Head Office:

Charles-de-Gaulle-Str. 5, 53113 Bonn, Germany
Tel: ++49-228-926 50 10 - Fax: ++49-228-926 50 99
www.ifoam.org - E-Mail: headoffice@ifoam.org



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE MOVEMENTS
FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES MOUVEMENTS D'AGRICULTURE BIOLOGIQUE
FEDERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE MOVIMIENTOS DE AGRICULTURA BIOLÓGICA
INTERNATIONALE VEREINIGUNG BIOLOGISCHER LANDBAUBEWEGUNGEN

After motions are received, the next step will be for the NMC to convene “Contact Groups”, in May-June 2005, to try to reconcile language before a decision will be taken by the IFOAM World Board.

The CC would like to draw your attention to the following major changes in the final revision draft.

- So as to improve the usability of the IAC and the Explanatory Notes the CC has incorporated all Explanatory Notes as footnotes to criterion they are referring to.
- In the Introduction the CC has provided examples of situations where solutions could be applied that vary from the provisions for the quality system of a certification body.
- The CC has incorporated definitions of the terms “Governing Board”, “Non-Conformity”, and “Violation”.
- A new allowance with the number 9.4.2 has been incorporated. The CC foresees that this will not be applicable in many instances as it requires the other inspection report to fully address the certification body’s own standards. Nevertheless, it has been brought to attention of the CC that this does occur in some countries. Because it deems this to be reasonable the CC has agreed to incorporate the proposed amendment.

For your further information on the IAC decision process I attach Policy 43. Please contact me at m.fecht@ifoam.org if you have any further questions.

On behalf IFOAM, I would very much like to thank all those parties that commented on the previous drafts of the IAC and encourage you to also take advantage of your right to make motions on the final draft.

Best regards,

Matthias Fecht
Coordinator, Organic Guarantee System

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Policy and Procedures for Revision of the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria

Purpose

This policy sets the procedure for the revision of the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria (IAC).

Policy

The Norms Management and Criteria Committees shall handle revision of the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria according to the following procedure

Procedures

The Criteria Committee (CC) presents objectives and a plan for each revision cycle of the IAC to the Norms Management Committee (NMC) for approval. NMC approves the plan and informs the World Board (WB).

The NMC ensures that the objectives, schedule and plan for revision of the Criteria are published.

The CC prepares proposed revisions according to the schedule and with consideration of stakeholder comments. Proposed revisions are made available for stakeholder input within a comment period of not less than 90 days. Distribution of the Draft Criteria follows IFOAM's policy and procedure for Stakeholder Consultation on the IFOAM Norms.

The CC acknowledges and considers all comments received by the deadline for comment. Special consideration is given to comments from the IOAS and Accredited Certification Bodies (ACBs). All comments are publicly available.

The CC publishes a summary of its responses to the comments and prepares a second revision draft of the IAC. This draft is subject to the same consultation procedure as the first draft.

At any stage of the revision drafting, the CC may employ other consultation mechanisms such as workshops/focus groups and web-based dialogues.

The CC submits the final draft of the Criteria to the NMC, who shall post it on the IFOAM website, distribute it to the IOAS, ACBs, WB, and IFOAM membership, and notify parties in Category 6 of the

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IFOAM Policy for Stakeholder Consultation. Members or representatives of these bodies may submit motions to the final draft within 60 days of final draft distribution/notification. Motions must present the requested revisions as edited text, and include rationale for the proposed change. The NMC may convene one or more contact groups with the aim of resolving conflict and reaching consensus. The motions are also sent to the CC, who shall be given the opportunity to comment on the motions.

The NMC considers the objectives of the revision, the motions, comments from the CC, and results of any contact groups, and makes a recommendation on the final text to the WB. The NMC recommendation includes the text of all motions and rationale for the NMC recommendation. The World Board considers the NMC recommendation and makes the final decision on the IAC revision.

Urgent Revisions

Urgent Criteria revisions may be made outside of the general revision schedule. Requests for urgent revisions may be made by the CC, the IOAS or the NMC. Urgent revision requests must be in the form of edited text and must be accompanied by rationale for both the revision itself and for the urgency of the revision. IOAS or CC requests for urgent revisions are submitted to the NMC. The NMC assesses if the revision request meets one or more of the following criteria for urgency:

- Contradictions within the IAC or between the IAC and the IFOAM Basic Standards.
- Issues that could severely damage IFOAM's credibility as a norms setting body.
- Issues that could severely damage the credibility of organic products in the public's perception.
- Issues that are creating serious problems in the accreditation process or the accreditation status of a substantial number of certifiers.
- Issues that would severely affect the implementation of the IFOAM Accreditation Program.

NMC then decides if the urgent revision moves forward for consultation and approval.

The proposed revision is then consulted with the IOAS, CC, and ACBs, sent to the membership, and published with a 60 day comment period. The Criteria Committee receives and considers the comments and submits a final recommendation, including the assessment of urgency, to the WB. The WB makes the final decision.

The approved revision is immediately notified to the IOAS, ACBs and CC, and published by IFOAM.

Revision of this Policy

The NMC may periodically review this policy and recommend revisions to the WB for approval

First approved by World Board, 0409 Seattle

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