



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE MOVEMENTS

PROCEDURE Recognition of Certification Standards Based on the IFOAM Basic Standards

NO: 42

VERSION: 2

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 31, 2008

REVISED DATE:

Purpose

To define the procedures to be followed by IFOAM and applicants regarding the recognition of standards according to IFOAM Policy 42.

Scope

See Policy 42 “IFOAM Recognition of Certification Standards Based on the IBS”

Application

1. The applicant submits:

- a. a completed application form in an electronic format to IFOAM via the IFOAM staff person responsible for administering the recognition process (hereafter called responsible IFOAM Staff, e.g. OGS Manager),
- b. an English version of the standard for which recognition is sought (hereafter called applicant standard),
- c. information and documentation that proves that the applicant standard was developed in line with a documented standard setting process, that was based on an open stakeholder consultation that involved all affected stakeholders consistent to the scope of the standard. The information must include a description of
 - the stakeholders,
 - the consultation process,
 - the decision making process.
- d. documentation that clearly states the body owning the standard,
- e. a completed Standards Evaluation Matrix as provided by IFOAM,
- f. when the application refers to the recognition of a governmental regulation not owned by the applicant, the contact details of the appropriate contact person of the government concerned,
- g. when the application refers to the recognition of a private standard not owned by the applicant, the contact details of the appropriate contact person and proof of permission of the standards owner,
- h. upon request pays the Application and Compliance Evaluation Fee.

2. The responsible OGS staff person on behalf of the NMC
 - a. within 14 days of its receipt assesses the completeness of the application,
 - b. informs the applicant when application is complete or requests additional missing information by an agreed date,
 - c. requests payment of the Application and Compliance Assessment Fee,
 - d. informs the Norms Management Committee and the Executive Director about completed applications and payment of application fee or respectively failure thereof,
 - e. transmits completed applications after payment of application fee to the Standards Committee for evaluation,
 - f. informs the IFOAM World Board and the IOAS about received applications,
 - g. announces the application in at least one IFOAM periodical and on the IFOAM website,
 - h. invites public comment on the application for a period of 30 days.
 - i. informs governments about any evaluation of their standards/regulations and seeks their cooperation.

Evaluation

3. The Standards Committee evaluates the standard setting process of the applicant,
4. The IOAS
 - a. assesses the compliance of the requirements in the applicant standard with the IFOAM Basic Standards,
 - b. assesses for every identified non-compliance (variation) whether the conditions under which it applies are specified,
 - c. informs the Standards Committee about the outcome of its assessment.
5. The Standards Committee
 - a. if applicable requests from the applicant body:
 - a justification (need and necessity) for every variation¹,
 - an overview showing which requirements in the applicant standard exceed the IFOAM Basic Standards, and informs the applicant about the time involved in and additional fees (Variation Evaluation Fee) to be paid for completing the evaluation,
 - b. after payment of the Variation Evaluation Fees assesses, based on the applicants response the justification of the variation(s) (need and necessity)²,
 - c. assesses whether the variation(s) violate the Principles of Organic Agriculture,
 - d. assesses whether requirements of the applicant standard that exceed those of the IBS on balance compensate for identified deficient variation(s),

1 See Policy 42 "IFOAM Recognition of Certification Standards Based on the IBS"

2 See Policy 42 "IFOAM Recognition of Certification Standards Based on the IBS"

- e. assesses whether the standard in its entirety enforces practices that clearly distinguish organic from conventional production and processing practices,
- f. assesses whether the total number of variations is acceptable,
- g. assesses whether the nature of (the) variation(s) is acceptable,
- h. may at any point of the evaluation request additional information from the applicant by an agreed date. The applicant will be informed that upon request the deadline might be extended once to an agreed date,
- i. may at any point of the evaluation stop the process because of failure of the applicant to provide necessary information,
- j. may at any point as a result of its evaluation make a recommendation to the Norms Management Committee whether to recognize the applicant standard. The recommendation is accompanied by an assessment report. Any assessment report covers
 - the assessment process,
 - results and rationale for decision and
 - recommendations regarding changes needed for the recognition of the applicant standard.

Review and Final Recommendation

6. The Norms Management Committee based on the recommendation of the Standards Committee
 - a. may request additional information for re-consideration or corrective actions from the applicant by an agreed date. The applicant will be informed that upon request the deadline might be extended once to an agreed date,
 - b. may call for a contact meeting between the applicant, the Standards Committee (SC), and where applicable the IOAS, under auspices of the Norms Management Committee in order to reconcile issues,
 - c. taking into consideration all relevant information (evaluation, corrective actions, results of contact meeting) makes a recommendation, including a detailed report and rationale, to the WB.

Final Decision and Publication

7. The World Board takes the final decision based on the Norms Management Committee recommendation.
8. The Norms Management Committee informs the Standards Committee, the Criteria Committee and the IOAS about the World Board decision.
9. The Responsible IFOAM Staff
 - a. requests the payment of the Standards Recognition Fee,
 - b. announces recognitions of standards in at least one IFOAM periodical and for one month on the IFOAM website,
 - c. establishes and maintains a register of recognized standards. The register is published on the IFOAM website,

- d. on behalf of IFOAM informs the standards owner and the third party applying for the recognition of a standard/regulation about the results of any evaluation.
10. The standards owner or applicant upon request pays the Standards Recognition Fee.
11. The standards owner publishes recognized standards or recognized parts of standards in a way that clearly distinguishes them from its non recognized standards or the non recognized parts of a standard.

Annual Report and Notification of Changes

12. The standards owner or applicant immediately notifies the responsible IFOAM staff of any major changes and annually by the 30th of April,
 - a. whether changes to the recognized certification standard have taken place (any change is reported according to steps 1a to 1g above). Any liability caused due to failure to report changes of standards will be born by the applicant,
 - b. upon request pays the Renewal Fee (no changes).

Confirmation of Recognition in Case No or Minor Changes

13. When no or minor changes that do not affect the recognition status have occurred, the responsible IFOAM staff informs the Norms Management Committee accordingly and requests payment of Renewal Fee (no changes).
14. The Norms Management renews the recognition.

Re-evaluation and in Case of Changes

15. When changes to the recognized standard have occurred that could affect the recognition status, the responsible IFOAM staff, based on a recommendation by the Standards Committee, initiates the procedures outlined from 2 above onwards.
16. Immediately after a revision of the IFOAM Basic Standards the responsible IFOAM staff on behalf of the Norms Management Committee informs owners of the need to re-submit recognized standards/regulations.
17. Immediately upon notification by IFOAM the standards owner or applicant applies for re-evaluation of a recognized standard according to step 1a to 1h above.

Communications

All communication between the parties and decisions taken in this process may be by e-mail or other means of electronic communication.

Fees³

The following fees apply.

Fee	Steps Covered	Euro (€)	Due
1) Application and Compliance Assessment Fee	1-4	1250	total upon request (2c)
2) Variations Evaluation Fee	5	500/day	total upon request (3d)
3) Standards Recognition Fee	6-9	500	total upon request (7a)
4) Renewal Fee (No changes)	13-14	250	total upon request (10a)
5) Re-evaluation Fee (Changes) ⁴	same	same	same

IFOAM World Board initiation of Recognition

The relevant parts of this procedure are applied accordingly in case the IFOAM World Board initiates the process of recognition.

Approved by the Norms Management Committee, March 31, 2008 in Bonn/ Germany

³ Fee structure approved by Norms Management Committee, 25th of June, 2007. The exact fees approved by IFOAM Executive Director, 6th of July 2007.

⁴ A re-evaluation includes the procedures described under 2 to 8. The same fees as for the initial application apply.