



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANISATION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS



International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements



**UNCTAD**  
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE  
AND DEVELOPMENT

# Study and Recommendations for International Requirements for Organic Certification Bodies

9-13 October 2006

Stockholm, Schweden

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# Outline of the presentation

- **Background and Objective**
- **Terms of Reference**
- **Concept guiding the development of the 1st draft**
- **Examples**
- **Report from the workshop**



# Background and Objective

- Study is based on a previous ITF study “Requirements for Certification – Situation and Scope for Harmonization”.
- It takes into account the discussion and results of the previous ITF Accreditation workshop and ITF meeting (December 2005).

## ITF is interested in developing

- a common set of International Requirements for Organic Certification Bodies
- “set” is understood as those requirements that certification bodies must meet in order for their certification services to be recognized in the course of international trade.



# Terms of Reference

- Identify existing requirements in detail
- Draft preliminary recommendations for essential certification requirements and non essential ISO 65 Guide requirements

**The common set of International Requirements is expected to consist of**

- the ISO Guide 65
- + a set of essential organic certification requirements
- recommendations if the International Requirements should drop any ISO 65 requirements due to their inappropriateness and/or difficulty to enforce.

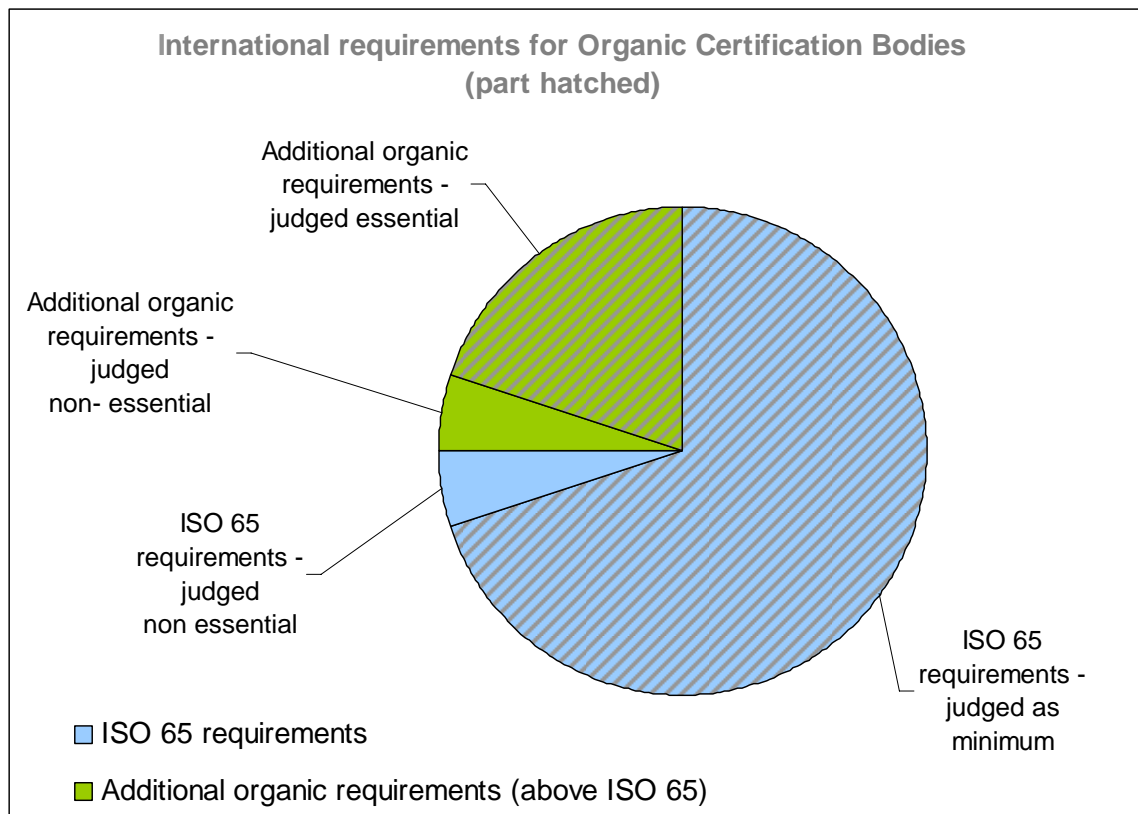


# Terms of Reference

- Provide for flexible requirements for scale and stage of development of certification bodies
- Document should reflect minimum/essential requirements



# Concept



# Concept

## Areas of requirements (boxes)

- Box 1: production standard (not relevant in the course of this study)
- Box 2: certification scheme (how certification is conducted, sector specific)
- Box 3: Certification Body Competence Requirements (mainly ISO Guide 65, sector unspecific)

*Box 2 is impacted by box 3; box 2 is the sector specific translation of box 3*

- **add a “sector specific explanation”**
- **add an additional essential organic requirement**



# Concept

## Level of detail

Prescriptive details versus the idea that requirements shall be “outcome” based

Aspects to consider:

- Harmonization
- Minimum/essential requirements
- Conducting process certification requests more details
- Competition between CBs
- Protect organic integrity



# Concept

## **Flexible requirements considering the stage of development**

in areas in which organic is just emerging, in order to support the development of

- local CBs
- local markets
- and to facilitate operators to access international markets.

Lower barriers, but forever?

- ▶ “Progress Requirements”
- ▶ Finally after a certain period of time requirements apply equally



# Discussion of the draft

The draft lists all ISO Guide 65 requirements and provides for additional

- sector specific explanations
- essential organic requirements

The draft categorizes the requirements into the following:

m: minimum/essential

p: progress requirement

d: respective ISO Guide 65 requirement can be dropped (for some an alternative is provided)

+ indicates that it is something additional to ISO



# Discussion of the draft

Points for discussion:

It is in any case much easier to add something than to delete.

- deleted too much?
- added not enough?

Is something really an additional essential “organic” requirement or can it still be considered as a sector specific explanation?



# Discussion of the draft

Nr.	ISO Guide 65	+ essential organic	Sector specific explanation	m/p/d	Points for discussion
<b>1</b>	<b>Scope</b>				
1.1	This Guide specifies general requirements that a third-party operating a product certification system shall meet if it is to be recognized as competent and reliable. In this Guide the term "certification body" is used to cover any body operating a product certification system. The word "product" is used in its widest sense and includes processes and services; the word 'standard' is used to include other normative documents such as specifications or technical regulations.		Organic certification is the certification of a process. Subject to evaluation and certification should be the entire production process/method (entire production chain) and not just the final product.	m	
1.2	The certification system used by the certification body may include one or more of the following, which could be coupled with production surveillance or assessment and surveillance of the supplier's quality system or both, as described in ISO/IEC Guide 53: a) type testing or examination; b) testing or inspection of samples taken from the market or from supplier's stock or from a combination of both,- c) testing or inspection of every product or of a particular product, whether new or already in use; d) batch testing or inspection; e) design appraisal NOTE 1 ISO/IEC Guide 28 may be consulted for a		The Organic Certification System applies throughout the entire production chain; it should be based on document review and on-site inspection visits in order to verify whether a defined production method standard has been met. Sample analyses may serve as an additional tool for clarifying suspicious facts.	m	Chain of custody: Clarification that the certification system applies throughout the entire chain of custody is added as explanation in the scope area and is taken up again under 10, Evaluation



# Discussion of the draft

Nr.	ISO Guide 65	+ essential organic	Sector specific explanation	m/p/d	Points for
4	4 Certification body				
4.1	General Provision				
4.1.1	The policies and procedures under which the certification body operates and their administration shall be non-discriminatory and shall be administered in a non-discriminatory manner. Procedures shall not be used to impede or inhibit access by applicants, other than as provided for in this Guide.			m	1
4.1.2	The certification body shall make its services accessible to all applicants whose activities fall within its declared field of operation. There shall not be undue financial or other conditions. Access shall not be conditional upon the size of the supplier or membership of any association or group, nor shall certification be conditional upon the number of certificates already issued.		Regarding financial condition – certification fee structure should be standardized and publicly available on request	m	
4.1.3	The criteria against which the products of a supplier are evaluated shall be those outlined in specified standards. Requirements for standards suitable for this purpose are contained in ISO/IEC Guide 7. If explanation is required as to the application of these documents for a specific certification system, it shall be formulated by relevant and impartial committees or persons possessing the necessary technical competence, and published by the certification body.		Criteria against which the organic process is evaluated are given in a specified production method standard; see definition of production method standard	m	



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# Workshop report

- Nature of the document:  
“Equivalency document versus requirements for CBs”
- Process for further consultation
- Title of the document
- Ownership



## Workshop report

If the thrust of the document is changed then the title should be reconsidered.

The group decided to propose the following title:

**“Requirements for Conducting Organic Certification: Guidelines for Establishing Equivalence”**

