



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



International Federation  
of Organic Agriculture  
Movements



United Nations Conference  
on Trade and Development

INTERNATIONAL TASK FORCE ON HARMONIZATION AND EQUIVALENCE IN ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

# Terms of Reference

to study  
**Feasibility of an Organic "MLA"**

# Work Plan

Element (of strategy)	Action	Status
International Standard	Acknowledge a standard	Decision: recognize Codex Guidelines & IBS
Equivalency	Common regulatory objectives	Proposal
	Guidelines and criteria	Terms of reference
	Influence of/effect on producers	Concept note
	Consumer research	Information note
Certification Body Requirement	International certification body requirement	Proposal
Recognition of & Cooperation among CABs	Organic MLA	Terms of Reference
	Other cooperation	Presentation (PGS)



# Objective of Feasibility Study

Provide a basis for ITF decision on whether to try to establish a multilateral recognition agreement (MLA) among those bodies that accredit (or approve, as in case of some governments) organic certification bodies



UNCTAD

# Background

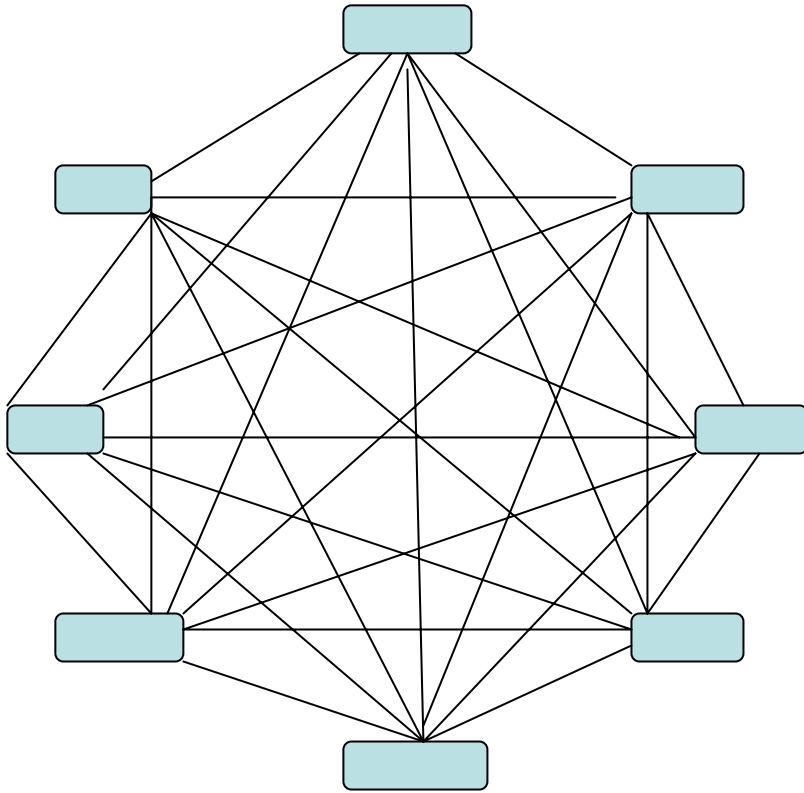
WE RECOGNIZE THAT:

Recognition among accrediting/approval bodies, based on equivalent standards and common or equivalent requirements for organic certification bodies, would greatly ease the organic trade restrictions.

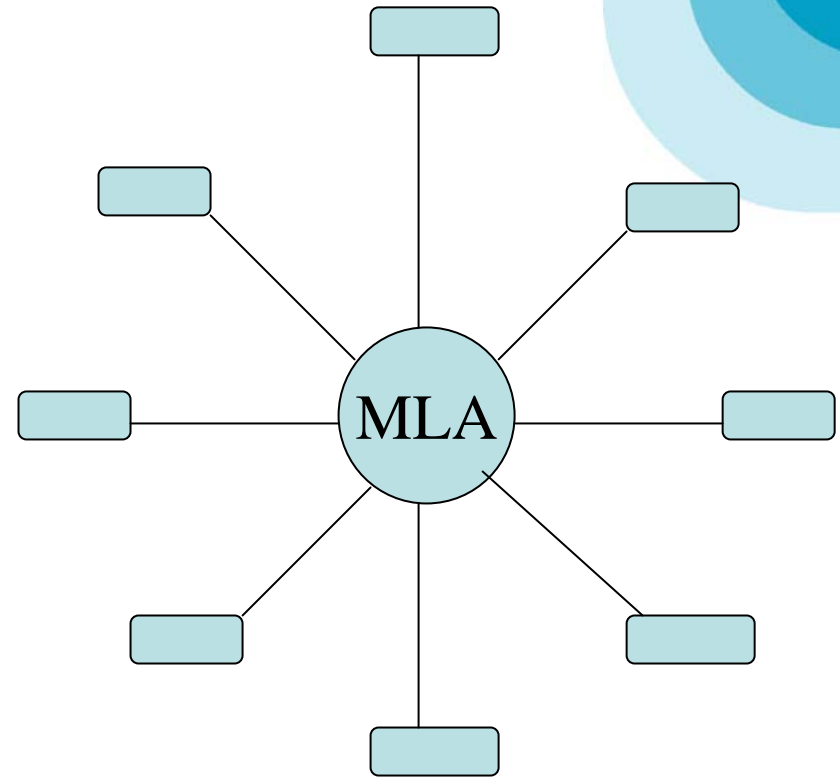
Any kind of recognition helps, but mutual recognition is desirable.



UNCTAD



**Bilateral  
agreements  
Among 8 actors**



**Multilateral  
agreement  
Among 8 actors**

Mutual recognition is much more efficient than bilateral recognition.



# Background

Mutual recognition (Multi-lateral agreement - MLA) is more difficult to achieve.



UNCTAD

# Feasibility Assessment

Address the question, "Could an MLA of the relevant actors be established?"

Cover all relevant actors

- Government accrediting bodies
- Government approval bodies
- IFOAM Accreditation System
- National Accreditation Bodies (IAF)



**IFOAM**



**UNCTAD**

# Methodology

Consultation & dialogue - key actors

Legal analysis

Experiences of actors and case studies

Workshop

Survey of commitment

- Degree of commitment
- Conditions of agreement



**IFOAM**



**UNCTAD**

# Negative Result

Rationale

Alternative steps to foster recognition



UNCTAD

# Positive Result

Rationale based on results of process

Conditions and limitations of an MLA

Effect of recognition at accreditation/approval level on  
CBs

Recommendations for next steps



UNCTAD

# Activities and Timeline

One workshop (between February and May, 2007)

First draft report, July 2007

Presentation to ITF , Autumn, 2007

Final report, November-December 2007.



UNCTAD