CERTIFICATION IN ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

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ORGANIC AGRICULTURE (2012)

• Certified agricultural lands: 37.5 million ha (0.9% of global agricultural lands)

• Organic wild collection areas: 31 million ha (Finland/berries, Zambia/honey, India/medicinal plants)

• Organic producers: 1.9 million (e.g. India 600 000, Uganda 190 000, Mexico 170 000) in 164 countries

• Certified organic tea/mate: 97 592 ha in 21 countries
WHY CERTIFICATION?

• To protect scrupulous producers and processors

• To build trust and avoid consumers confusion

• To facilitate trade via conformity assessment
ORGANIC GUARANTEE SYSTEMS

Certification is only one element of a more complex system

• Technical reference: standards (IFOAM or Codex)
• Legislation (mandatory or voluntary)
• Inspection (internal or external) and certification
• Accreditation of certification bodies (public or private)
• Equivalence (or agreements) with export countries
ORGANIC STANDARDS

• Standards as references for practices and allowed/prohibited substances: food/feed crops, livestock, processed products (food and beverages), fibbers, wild-harvested products, aquaculture

• IFOAM Basic Standards for Organic Production and Processing (since 1980) for foods, fibbers, aquaculture and social justice

• FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Guidelines for the Production, Processing, Labelling and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods (since 1999) for crops, livestock, bees, processing and (since 2011 in the making) aquaculture/seaweeds
CONFORMITY AND SURVEILLANCE

• Inspection, certification and labelling seek to demonstrate that a production has followed specific production requirements, as described in the organic standard of specific markets.

• IFOAM Criteria for Programmes Certifying Organic Agriculture and Processing follow ISO 65 + conditions specific to organics (e.g. factors determining frequency of inspection, inspection for GE products, chain of custody, inspection of grower groups).

• Accreditation of organic certifiers according to specific organic standards and verification processes: International Organic Accreditation Service (IOAS); conformity to European standards EN 45011 or ISO 65; governments accreditation programmes (e.g. USDA).
EXPORTING ORGANIC OPERATORS

The certification process is organized in view of a specific market(s):

• The operator decides which Certification Body (CB) to use
• Must comply to domestic regulations (where applicable)
• Must comply to export market regulations (where applicable)
• Must comply to own CB and buyer’s CB requirements

Recognition between CBs:

• Common accreditation (e.g. USDA, IFOAM)
• Re-certification based on other inspection report (document review)
• Integrated inspection: one inspection-multiple certifications
• Joint inspection programmes
CERTIFICATION OF SMALLHOLDERS

Third party certification is too costly for smallholders

- Smallholders production and processing certified through Internal Control Systems (ICS) – recognized by EC and others

- In ICS relies on internal inspectors for annual inspection and record keeping - the external body becomes the auditor of the ICS

- Group certification systems commonly gather about 50 producers
ORGANIC PLAYING FIELD AND PLAYERS

• Inspection and certification: government agencies (government criteria) and/or private bodies (IFOAM and other norms) – ISO 65

• Accreditation: national accreditors (IAF guide) and/or international accreditors (IOAS) – ISO 62

• Standards (technical reference): international (IFOAM or Codex), national legislation (mandatory or voluntary) and/or private labels
PRIVATE

WTO

IFOAM

Codex

IOAS

Compliance or equivalence?

Gov.A

Gov.B

PRIVATE

Accreditation

Inspection

Certifier X

Farmers Processors

Certifier Y

Farmers Processors

PRIVATE

Accreditation

Inspection

Certifier A

Farmers Processors

Certifier B

Farmers Processors

PUBLIC
THE ORGANIC MARKET TODAY

• In 2012, 1.9 million farmers from 164 countries were certified organic, with a global sale of certified products of USD 64 billion (44% in USA, 44% EU, 4% Canada, 2% Japan)

• The global turnover of organic certification might be in the range of 400 million Euros (based on estimated market value)

• Many organic farms are organized for group certification; for example in India, only 545 of the 733 172 farms are certified as individual farms.

• Besides third-party certification, participatory guarantee systems (PGS) are on the rise for domestic markets (e.g. India and Brazil recognize PGS)
ORGANIC GUARANTEE SYSTEMS

- Today, 110 countries have an organic regulation: 69 fully implemented; 19 finalized regulations but not yet fully implemented; 12 countries in the process of drafting legislation

- In addition, there are >121 private organic standards of CBs, with standards extended to social justice, restaurants, fisheries, ecotourism, cosmetics (e.g. Global Organic Textile Standard)

- 549 organic certification bodies worldwide (from 85 countries), with a few operating in most continents. Certified operations are found in almost all countries of the world

- Emerging markets (Argentina, China, India, Brazil and Korea) have (or are about to) develop organic import requirements
ITF/GOMA OBJECTIVES
(2002-2012)

• Dialogue between private and public institutions involved in trade and regulatory activities to reduce organic trade barriers

• Focus on opportunities for harmonization, recognition, equivalence and other forms of cooperation within and between government and private sector organic control systems

• Facilitate international organic trade and access of developing countries to international organic markets
ITF TOOL: IROCB

• Helps governments determine if foreign certification bodies comply with equivalent performance requirements

• If foreign CB operates to IROCB requirements, it can be recognized (approved) based on equivalence
ITF TOOL: EquiTool

Guidelines for assessing equivalence between two or more standards for organic production/processing:

1. Procedures to use for the assessment
2. Criteria to use for deciding if differences in the standards can be rationalized
3. Annex for determining common objectives (later expanded into COROS)
GOMA TOOL: COROS

- Implementing EquiTool required expanding its Annex 2 into Common Organic Regulatory Objectives (COROS)

- Finalized in April 2011 in cooperation with IFOAM’s Organic Guarantee System, COROS sets 10 objectives for: systems’ management, soil fertility, synthetic inputs, pollution, harmful technologies, animals welfare+health, integrity, identity and fairness

- COROS being used for:
  - Development of Asia Organic Standard (AROS)
  - Promoting recognition of existing organic standards
  - Bilateral and multilateral comparisons of standards
  - Self-evaluation for future bilateral equivalencies
It can be a frustrating journey through all the standards and regulations of the global organic marketplace.
Now there’s an opportunity to create a clearer path.