The ECL Space Project

Learning from Social and Environmental Schemes for the ECL Space:

IFOAM

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements

Case study

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Table of contents

List of Acronyms

APEDA	Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority
CB	Certification Body
EC	European Commission
EEA	European Economic Area
EEC	European Economic Community
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
GA	General Assembly
IBS	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements Basic Standards
IFOAM	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOAS	International Organic Accreditation Service
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
ISEAL	International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ITC	International Trade Centre
JAS	Japanese Agricultural Standards
KVIC	Khadi Village Industries Commission of Government of India
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NOP	National Organic Programme of United State Department of Agriculture
NOSB	National Organic Standards Board
NPOP	National Programme for Organic Production of India
NSOP	National Standards for Organic Products
OFPA	Organic Foods Production Act
PFA	Prevention of Food Adulteration
SAI	Social Accountability International
SME	Small and Micro Enterprise
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WB	World Board
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

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Executive Summary

The openness and voluntary nature of IFOAM has been successful to provide a worldwide market guarantee and integrity of organic products.

IFOAM understands the need of the organic industry for performance standards and has set the IFOAM Basic Standards (IBS) and IFOAM Accreditation Criteria (IAC). Both IBS and IAC are continuously improving in response to developments and challenges in the organic industry.

IFOAM has maintained a balance in the representation of stakeholders from the North and the South. IFOAM has empowered its members by giving them ownership of the fundamental principles and procedures that define the behaviour of the organic movement, and the authority to change them as they deem fit. IFOAM successfully fostered democratic participation in its decision making process and in neutralizing interest groups from dominating the process or be dominated by others.

IFOAM is quite successful too in dissociating the accreditation process from the certification processes and outsourcing them to separate independent bodies. IFOAM has firmly established the principle that only IFOAM accredited certification bodies can perform organic certification and issue certificates. Instead of internalizing the function of accreditation, IFOAM has established the IOAS to implement the IFOAM Accreditation Program. In doing so, IFOAM it would not have to constantly deal with the contentious problem of power-sharing and power-brokering among the members. Such an arrangement could have unleashed its potential of dividing and weakening the movement.

The IFOAM has internalized the environmental and social impact assessment by drafting mechanism within the IFOAM scheme to identify social and environmental impact. The IFOAM Code of Conduct for Organic Trade Guidance Document details the principles related to commitment to Social Justice in organic agriculture, transparency and accountability of negotiations, trading relationship, equitable distribution of returns, communication and information flow, skills development and capacity building, internal ethics and supporting the organic community.

As regards sustainable development and upliftment of small producers and medium enterprises (SMEs), IFOAM needs to make a comprehensive framework for the empowerment and sustainable development of theses groups. This might attract greater participation of stakeholders from developing countries in the organic movement. This would also ensure that social and environmental requirements for market access for these communities are fulfilled.

Based on the finding of the present study, a few lessons can be drawn for the implementation of ECL Space project.

- the art of balancing the process of decision-making between:
  - facilitating consensus among members
  - consensus building
  - information dissemination through electronic media and taking in to consideration local culture
- develop attractiveness for desired participation from developing countries

- take a holistic approach for betterment of environment, economic condition, human and animal, so that the precious movement like IFOAM becomes a boon for the entire world
- promote universal certification requirements or system as in countries like India as there are no certification requirement for domestic markets
- undertake an exercise to find alternative ways for certification that would appeal to western markets but would also cater to local culture and needs.

1. Background

Ethical Certification and Labelling (ECL) refers to a broad category of voluntary standardization, certification and labelling programmes providing assurance that certified organizations address environmental and/or social issues in a responsible manner. Labels help consumers vote their preference in the market place towards products that are produced according to the requirements of the programmes. Examples of these schemes include the Rainforest Alliance (RA), the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), the Fair Trade Labelling Organizations International (FLO) and the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

This study is part of a series of case studies carried out by Pi to identify institutional settings that be applicable to the ECL Space, and elements that could help ensure effective ECL implementations on the ground meaningful multi-stakeholder participation, including for SMEs from developing countries and the support brought by the ECL schemes to the latter. More information on the ECL Space Project can be found at www.piec.org/ecl_space

This study represents a desk review of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) scheme and compares it with other schemes in the organic field: Codex Alimentarius, JAS, NPOP India, EU and USDA Regulation.

2. Methodology

The findings of this study are based on detailed research. A duel approach has been used:

2.1 Desk Study

- information available on the Internet was collected
- information was gathered from the websites of International Federation of organic agriculture Movements (IFOAM), European Union (EU), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Japan and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- information available in IFOAM policies and operating manual was collected
- information available in IFOAM Basic Standards and Accreditation Criteria
- various other studies conducted by other agencies were referred
- information available in APEDA guidelines was collected

2.2 Stakeholder's Feedback

A questionnaire was prepared and sent to different categories of stakeholders: Certified Organic Producers and Processors, Certification Bodies, Academicians, Traders, NGOs, Government Authorities, International Organic Promotional, Research Institutes etc.

3. Brief Information about the Programmes Covered in this Study

3.1 IFOAM

The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) was established in 1972 as an umbrella organization for national organic agriculture associations. IFOAM members, more than 730 from 100 countries, include certification bodies, traders and processors. IFOAM's mission is leading, uniting and assisting the organic movement in its full diversity. IFOAM is a democratic federation of member organizations with the principle of one organization, one vote.

IFOAM has established International Basic Standards of Organic Agriculture and Food Processing (IBS), which provide a framework for various certification programmes. The IFOAM standards are updated regularly by the IFOAM Standards Committee and are approved by IFOAM General Assembly every second year. IFOAM has a consultative status and/or cooperates with the European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural resources (IUCN), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the ISO, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). IFOAM is also a member of ISEAL Alliance.

IFOAM has established an international Accreditation Programme, which is operated by the International Organic Accreditation Service (IOAS). IOAS is an independent non-profit organization with IFOAM as sole member.

IFOAM offers many platforms for information exchange e.g. at the Organic World Congress and numerous other international or regional IFOAM events. The magazine "Ecology & Farming", conference proceedings and other publications are also important information and networking tools. IFOAM's international lobby activities give the organic movement a voice and influence. IFOAM is implementing a four year project programme known as "I - GO" (IFOAM-Growing Organic) supporting organic movements in developing countries.

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3.2 Codex Alimentarius Commission

In 1962, a Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme was created in order to protect consumers from health hazards and deception while at the same time facilitating international trade in food products. The programme operates through an intergovernmental body referred to as the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The work of the Commission aims primarily at the prevention of use of national regulations as technical barriers to trade in food products. The work of the Commission has been specifically recognized under the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures of the WTO (SPS).

Two Codex committees are currently developing standards that are relevant to the international trade in organic products. The first is the Committee on Food Labeling, which is establishing guidelines for the production, processing, labeling and marketing of organically produced foods. The second is the Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems is developing guidelines for food import and export inspection and certification systems.

At its twenty-third session, held at the FAO headquarters in Rome from 28 June to 3 July 1999, the Commission adopted Guidelines on the Production, Processing, Labeling and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods. The Committee on Food Labeling is also developing standards for livestock products, which will be considered by the Commission at a later stage.

While the development of Codex guidelines is not a way of establishing equivalency, WTO may refer to these guidelines in its dispute settlement procedures.

The formulation of the Codex guidelines is largely based on European Union regulations on organic food products and IFOAM standards. The guidelines should be of assistance to countries developing regulations on organic food products.

The International Task Force on harmonization and equivalence in Organic Agriculture (ITF) is a joint initiative of the FAO, the IFOAM and UNCTAD. It serves as an open-ended platform for dialogue between private and public institutions (intergovernmental, governmental and civil society) involved in trade and regulatory activities in the organic agriculture sector. At its first meeting in February 2002 in Nuremberg, the Task Force agreed upon its Term of reference and a work plan. ITF held its second meeting in Geneva on 20-21 October, 2003. The primary focus of this meeting was to review the background documents of the situation in the sector and discuss mechanisms for harmonization, equivalency and mutual recognition.

3.3 EU Regulation (EEC) No.2092/91

The Council Regulation (EEC) 2092/91 is the primary European regulation governing organic agriculture in Europe. It applies to crop and animal products for human consumption as well as to animal food, and contains rules pertaining to production, processing, marketing (labeling and advertising) and trade of both raw and finished products. It refers exclusively to products that will be sold as organic. The Regulation is applicable in all fifteen old EU member states. The European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement allows Norway, Ice-

land, and Liechtenstein to participate as well. Switzerland has its own national organic regulation but maintains very close ties with the EU.

Regulation 2092/91 was created to provide a common, legalized definition of "organic" enabling the protection of consumers and producers from cases of organic fraud. As with North American organic standards, Regulation 2092/91 requires third party certification, accreditation, audit trails, annual inspections, material lists, defined conversion periods and sustainable farm plans (Organic Trade Association 2002).

Since its introduction in 1991, the Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91has had several additions, including a set of guidelines for livestock production (1804/99) in 1999, and the establishment of a community logo (EC No. 331/2000) in March 2000 bearing the words 'Organic Farming - EC Control System' to be used on a voluntary basis by producers whose systems and products have been found to satisfy EU Regulation.

Although the European Commission initially drafted the EEC Regulation 2092/91, its ongoing development is the responsibility of the Directorate General for Agriculture (DGAGRI) located in Brussels. The implementation of the regulation (including some of the costs) is the responsibility of individual member states, while the Dublin-based Food and Veterinary Office of the Directorate General European Commission Health and Consumer Protection (DG SANCO) in is in charge of supervising the implementation of the Regulation by member states and countries on the Third Country List. The third country list includes five countries - Argentina, Australia, Hungary, Israel and Switzerland as defined in Article 11 of EEC Regulation 2092/91, which provides for the drawing up of this list by the European Commission and sets out the rules for importation of organic products into EU as well as the criteria for inclusion on this Third Country List.

ISO/IEC Guide 65, which outlines the requirements for certification bodies operating product certification, has been fully adopted by Europe in the form of regulation EN 45011. While EN 45011 is not specifically applicable to certification of production methods, it applies to any certification body operating within EU, including organic certification bodies. As of January 1 1998, inspection bodies approved by EU must satisfy the requirements laid down in EN 45011.

3.4 The National Organic Program (NOP), USDA

The Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) of 1990 was adopted as part of the 1990 Farm Bill. It requires United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to develop national standards for organically produced agricultural products to assure consumers that agricultural products marketed as organic meet consistent, uniform standards. The OFPA requires USDA to develop national organic standards and establish an organic certification program based on recommendations of a 15-member National Organic Standards Board (NOSB). The OFPA and the National Organic Program (NOP) require that agricultural products labeled as organic originate from farms or handling operations certified by a State or private agency that has been accredited by the. The accreditation program of NOP, USDA (based on ISO 65 Guide) sets the norms for accreditation of certification bodies.

The final regulations are similar to most of the standards organic producers and handlers currently use, and are intended to be flexible enough to accom-

modate the wide range of operations and products grown and raised in every region of the United States. These include:

- production and handling requirements, which address organic crop production, wild crop harvesting, organic livestock management, and processing and handling of organic agricultural products
- the National list of allowed Synthetic and prohibited Non-Synthetic Substances is also included
- labeling requirements for organic products, along with compliance, testing, fee, and State program approval requirements, Certification and record keeping requirements
- accreditation requirements for receiving and maintaining accreditation, as well as requirements for foreign accreditation
- other administrative functions of the NOP, which include evaluation of foreign organic certification programs

3.5 Japanese Agricultural Standard (JAS)

In the year, 2000 Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of Japan enacted the Japanese Agricultural Standards (JAS), which came in effect from April 2001. The Law states that organic products of vegetable origin sold in Japan need to bear JAS seal and to be certified by an approved and registered certification body. MAFF accredits certification bodies based on ISO/IEC Guide 65. In addition, MAFF has recognized the EU, USDA and Australian organic guarantee systems. Even so, the Japanese traders and processors still need to get a 'government or corresponding organisation certificate' to use products certified under those systems.

On June11, 2000, JAS law was updated and a new "Organic Certification Program" has been introduced. With effect from April 1st, 2001 agricultural products (vegetable, fruit, grains etc) and processed foods made from/of agricultural materials must get JAS certification.

3.6 National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP), India

The National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) was released in 2000 to provide as institutional mechanism for the implementation of National Standards for Organic Products (NSOP) through a National Accreditation Policy released in May 2001. The NPOP is developed and implemented by Government of India through its Ministry of Commerce. The Ministry constitutes a Steering Committee for NPOP, whose members are drawn from accreditation bodies and other government and private organisation associated with the organic movement.

Subcommittee whenever necessary is appointed to advice the Steering Committee for NPOP on relevant issues. The Steering Committee for NPOP formulates a National Accreditation Policy and Programme and draw up NSOP, which includes standards for organic production and processes. The NPOP accreditation requirements are based on ISO/IEC Guide 65.

No organic products from India can be exported unless they are certified by an agency accredited by one of the accreditation body designated by the Government of India. These agencies are:

- Agricultural Product Export Development Authority (APEDA)
- Spices Board
- Coffee Board
- Tea Board
- Coconut Development Board

4. Application

4.1 IFOAM

The IFOAM scheme is open and voluntary. IFOAM Basic Standards (IBS) and IFOAM Accreditation Criteria are the basis of IFOAM scheme. The IFOAM basic standards are keystones of organic movement. They define principles, recommendations and required baseline standards that guide operators in producing their crops.

The producers who wish to offer products with an assurance as regards to organic guarantee, food safety and the social and environmental impacts of their products can get their products certified from any of the IFOAM accredited certification bodies. Since IFOAM is not a certification body, the Basic Standards are not used directly for certification. Instead, IBS are offered as guidelines to frame organic certification standards. The IFOAM accredited certification bodies assess the applicant for compliance with certifier's standards based on IBS and certify them. IFOAM Accreditation Criteria is sufficient to assure that certification bodies have a system in place, which is compatible with IBS.

IFOAM has established international Accreditation Criteria, which are operated by the International Organic Accreditation Service (IOAS), the independent accreditation harm of IFOAM. IFOAM accreditation is based on compliance with its Basic Standards and its Accreditation Criteria for certification bodies certifying organic agriculture and processing. Organic certification bodies from all over the world can apply for IFOAM Accreditation.

4.2 Codex Alimentarius

Codex Standards provide Guidelines to governments to establish organic regulations and also provide a background for the harmonization of government based regulations. Codex Standards are not used directly for certification and are not mandatory. In international trade the Codex Standards are referred by WTO to settle disputes in trade at international trade.

4.3 Western and Japanese Standards

EU, USA, Japanese regulations are mandatory regulations for international and respective national trade in organic production prescribed by the Government bodies in respective countries and in case of EU by member countries as well as Czech Republic, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland.

4.4 NPOP, India

NPOP is mandatory for export of organic products from India. Marketing Rules and regulations for local markets are not yet established by NPOP.

5. Type of Declaration

IFOAM advocates third party certification based on an independent system. The name of IFOAM may only be used in labeling of products if such use is explicitly permitted by a valid contract between the party which applies the label and IFOAM or IOAS.

Codex Alimentarius are established guidelines for organic food control systems in order to facilitate recognition of national systems as equivalent for the purpose of imports. However, Codex Alimentarius does not have any declaration. The national/regional regulatory bodies such as USA, EU, Japanese and NPOP India are also based on third party certification. The Certificate of Conformity provides the final form of declaration. Which allows the producer or operator to use logo of respective regulatory bodies on their certified products.

At the operator level, the site inspection is a vital process supportive of declaration. The inspection reports cover relevant aspects of the standards, adequately validate the information provided by the operator and indicate any non-compliance. Inspectors are required to record what occurred during the inspection visit, to include at least the following:

- date and duration of inspection
- persons interviewed
- fields and facilities visited
- type of document audits conducted (input/output; yield/sales; trace back, etc.)

Based on the inspection report, a certificate of conformity provides the final form of declaration. Certification decisions are solely the responsibility of the certification body, which is the only agency authorized by IFOAM to issue certificates confirming conformity of a certified operation. Certificates include at least the following information:

- name and address of the operator
- name and address of the certification body
- programme under which the operator is certified
- scope of the certification including reference to the applicable standards, the products or product categories, and the certification status (conversion organic) of each
- date of issuance
- period of validity of the certificate of conformity

6. Scope and Approach

IFOAM scheme is unique in nature when compared with other systems such as Codex Alimentarius, JAS and NPOP India as it includes social, economic requirements and code of conduct for traders. The requirement of compliance standards is same for all standards with relation to organic production.

6.1 Scope

6.1.1 Environment

Respect for the environment is central to principles of organic agriculture. All the organic schemes (IFOAM, Codex Alimentarius, EU and USDA Regulations, Japanese regulations and NPOP, India) cover some environmental aspects of organic agriculture, which are more or less similar.

IFOAM guidelines on environmental responsibility are mainly focused on making sure that the organisation meets all national laws regarding environment. The environmental aspects, although not fully covered by organic standards, emphasize awareness of organic farmers regarding environmental impact of their work. The waste and water management policy, recycling of materials, steps to reduce pollution and energy consumption are given due consideration in organic standards.

6.1.2 Social

IFOAM attaches importance to social aspects like the relation between management and staff, the observance of all national laws on social issues such as health, safety and labour rights, local labour laws and any related ILO or UN conventions.

6.1.3 Economic

The IFOAM Code of Conduct espouses equitable distribution of returns. Equitable distribution of returns means that all supply chain partners are able to cover costs and receive fair remuneration for their efforts through prices that reflect the true value of the product. Risk sharing mechanisms are actively encouraged. For example, the costs of certification are passed on to the consumers who normally pay a price premium which varies from 5% to 50% or more.

Although the IBS include some standards for certification of small farmer groups, it does not have a clear agenda of sustainable development and empowerment of economically disadvantaged groups, e.g. small and medium enterprises (SMEs), through organic trade. A basic constraint of IFOAM is that it focuses on the process of organic trade, not who the traders are, nor how large or small their organic production is.

6.2 Approach

6.2.1 Performance

Approach of the IFOAM system is performance oriented. For example: if organic seed and plant material are not available, standard setting organization should set time limit for the use of conventional material which have not been treated with prohibited chemicals as per the IBS.

Performance of IFOAM in terms of stakeholder participation is reported in section 9 and numbers of hectares certified are reported under the title impact in section 16 below.

6.2.2 System

IFOAM provide standards and code of conduct which organic producers, processors and traders could adhere to and adopt. e.g. The deliberate use or negligent introduction of genetically engineered organisms or their derivatives to organic farming systems or products is prohibited. This shall include animals, seed, propagation material, and farm inputs such as fertilizers, soil conditioners, vaccines or crop protection materials. The aim is the protection of the environment and human health through reduction in use of pesticide and chemosynthesis fertilizers.

The IBS covers to some extent social concern through the code of conduct. The Code is not designed to replace social certification or to compete with other initiatives that address social accountability and social justice / ethical issues. IFOAM members who are participating in other certification scheme could find that they are already implementing some of the principles. IFOAM Code of Conduct virtually compliments each of the many different standards and systems currently in operation.

ECL has a learning from this that an all inclusive standards would reduce duplication as also paper work and achieve socio-economic well being of people in environment friendly manner

7. Coverage

7.1 Geographical Coverage

The IBS is implemented globally, by 730 member organizations in 100 countries. The largest consumers of organic agricultural products are Europe, USA, and Japan. Together these countries account for more than 90% of the organic products demand of the world. IFOAM's organic standards could be applied to all crops and agricultural systems as well as to all food and fiber production systems. The details on the local adoption process are provided in chapter 11.

However in developing countries like India the process of local adoption is limited. Among the eleven certification bodies operating in India, only one certification body is accredited by IFOAM. This means IFOAM Basic Standards are adopted locally to small a extent only.

7.2 Sectoral Coverage

From the perspective of the sectoral coverage, IFOAM is value chain specific in that it requires traceability of products from the retail sector back to agricultural producers. At the same time IFOAM is sector specific, referring to the agricultural crop production, processing and handling, animal husbandry, processing of textiles and aquaculture. IBS could be applied to all crops and agricultural system as well as to all food and fiber production system.

8. Key drivers / Origin

Organic movement started 40 years ago as movement of farmers. IFOAM coordinated the international activities of organic operators since 1972. As participation of stakeholders increased, trade in organic product grew mainly in Europe, USA and Japan from1980 to 1990. The trade continues to grow 20% per year.

By order of importance, the following key drivers led to the establishment of IFOAM: NGO's, producers, consumers, SMEs and to some extent value chain.

Codex is a joint venture of FAO and WHO, which are intergovernmental bodies providing guidelines for regulations to countries involved in organic trade, and owes its origin to a consideration for protection of consumers from health hazards/deception.

The others i.e. JAS, EU, USDA and Indian NPOP owe their origin to the Governments of respective countries/block of countries. They owe their origins to requirements of specific nations either to promote or regulate 'organic' production and trade.

9. Stakeholders Participation- Representativeness

IFOAM is a private multi-stakeholder movement, with around 46 percent of membership coming from the South and 55 percent from the North. Agricultural producers/processors from the South (52.5%) outnumber those from the North (47.5%), but there are more traders (some engaged in Fair Trade) from the North (53.3%) than from the South (46.7%) [Table 1].

Services	South	% to Total	North	% to Total	Grand Total	% to Total
Certification	65	*37.6*	108	*62.4*	173	*100.0*
Inspection	78	*56.9*	59	*43.1*	137	*19.3*
Consultancy, training, education, research	205	*44.9*	253	*55.1*	459	*64.5*
Agriculture. Production, processing	168	*52.5*	152	*47.5*	320	*45.0*
Trade, Fair Trade	107	*46.7*	122	*53.3*	229	*32.2*
PR, lobby, advocacy, legislation	62	*29.1*	151	*70.9*	213	*30.0*
Government body	31	*77.5*	9	*22.5*	40	*5.6*
Rural Development	80	*76.2*	25	*23.8*	105	*14.8*
Total no.: members & associates	312	*44.8*	399	*56.2*	711	*100.0*

Source of basic data: IFOAM website

Table 1. Distribution of IFOAM members and associates by North-South classification

The large majority of IFOAM members are private business enterprises and not-for-profit organizations, with less than 6% being governmental organizations [see Table 2]. In terms of services offered, 24.3% are certifiers and 19.3% are inspectors. The bulk are involved in consultancy, training, research and education (64.5%), agricultural production/ processing (45%), trade, including Fair Trade (32.2%), and public relations/ lobbying/ advocacy (30%).

There are no sources of data indicating the representation of consumer groups in IFOAM. But some 138 organizations (57 from the South, 81 from the North), or 19.4% of total IFOAM membership, appear to be membership-based organizations (their names bear the word 'association', 'co-operative', 'federation', 'society', or 'network'). Although most of these organizations are producer groups, their individual members could represent the typical consumer particularly in the North.

Likewise, no specific data exists on the SME coverage of IFOAM members, but a good number of them reported being involved in Rural Development. Using their involvement in rural development as a proxy for exposure to SMEs, it can be said that 105 organizations or 14.8% of IFOAM membership cater to SMEs. Of this number, 80 were organizations from the South and 25 from the North.

Services	Asia Pacific	Africa	Latin America	West Europe	East Europe	Central Asia & Middle East	North America	Total	% to Total
Certification	46	14	17	67	12	5	12	173	24.3
Inspection	44	1	13	49	18	5	7	137	19.3
Consultancy, training, education, research	100	34	40	184	64	13	24	459	64.5
Agriculture. Production, processing	81	32	34	121	25	13	14	320	45.0
Trade, Fair Trade	68	10	23	92	15	10	11	229	32.2
PR, lobby, advocacy, legislation	35	8	15	115	24	2	14	213	30.0
Government body	23	2	3	9	3	0	0	40	5.6
Rural Development	32	14	17	25	14	3	0	105	14.8
Total no.: members & associates	169	46	65	300	67	22	42	711	100.0
Percent to Total	23.8	6.5	9.1	42.2	9.4	3.1	5.9	100	

Source of basic data: IFOAM website

Table 2. Distribution of IFOAM members and associates by type of services offered

As against this the national standard of US, Japan and India are not at all representative as the respective governments are only stakeholders. In this case the sole stakeholders i.e. government need to hold regular consultation with interest groups such as farmers, NGOs, CBs etc and take their opinion for revision/betterment in the scheme.

10. Stakeholders Participation-Inclusiveness

10.1 Consultation (Comments / Inputs / Hearings on Standards)

Dialogue and consensus were the primary means adopted to formulate the IFOAM Basic Standards (IBS) and the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria (IAC), the two basic documents that establish the requirements for certification bodies seeking IFOAM accreditation. First published in 1980, the IBS has been adopted as the basis for national, regional, and international organic standards throughout the world. Over the years, both IBS and IAC have subsequently been subject to continuous review by members and other interested parties.

The latest revision of IBS and IAC was made in 2002. Having prepared the first revision draft based on the comments / suggestions of members, the Standards Committee (SC) of IFOAM circulated the draft to all members for their comments, which had to be submitted to SC within a prescribed period of 90 days. Changes were subsequently made in response to comments on the revision draft. To cite an example, the first draft proposed to integrate the topics on forestry, textiles, aquaculture, cleaning and sanitation, and plant multiplication into related chapters on ecosystem management, crop and livestock production, processing and labelling. In consideration of the comments received on the draft, the Standards Committee decided to again treat aquaculture as a separate chapter.

10.2 Direct Participation in Standard Setting Process

The IBS, IAC and the Code of Conduct for Organic Trade are continuously evolving. Inputs from existing and new members are processed and discussed within the organic movement with a view to further enhance the clarity and effectiveness of the IFOAM system. As the member begins to implement these guidelines, he/she will have developed his/her own ideas on ways to apply them. Such experiences are an important part of this learning process and feedback from members serves to further enhance the participatory, multi-stakeholders approach in standard setting.

10.3 Decision Making on Standards/Policy (Governance Structure, Voting power)

The organic movement is highly decentralized. As such, IFOAM relies mainly on dialogue and consensus in decision making on standards and accreditation criteria. As explained earlier, the basic documents underpinning the principles, procedures, and practices of IFOAM are continuously reviewed by the members and their inputs are assiduously processed by relevant committees and interest groups.

The voting rights of stakeholders ensure stakeholders participation in decision-making in setting standards and / or policy formulation. The stakeholders at national / regional and global / international levels participate in IFOAM system at respective levels by exercising their franchise for General Assembly formation. Stakeholders can be individual, associates, supporters, regional groups, sector specific groups, and interest groups.

The stakeholder participation in structural consultation system is shown in Annex 1

IFOAM members take concrete steps to carry out their responsibilities and use their privileges of:

- actively participating in IFOAM's internal organisation and structures
- contributing to and benefiting from IFOAM's international lobby activities
- influencing and contributing to the standard setting process for the IFOAM Basic Standards and the Accreditation Criteria
- increasing market access via the IFOAM International Organic Guarantee System, which includes the Accreditation Programme and the IFOAM Seal

10.4 Two-tier Process: Global/International Level and National/Regional

There is only one set of global organic standards and accreditation criteria which are applied in local certification programs. Indeed, IFOAM standards have formed the basis for national, regional, and international organic certification. Nonetheless, deviant practices continue to abound and threaten to undermine the integrity of organic certification.

Assessment of the operator's compliance with the IFOAM norms is done by an IFOAM accredited certification agency. For an international certification body to operate locally, it should be duly registered and accredited by the government of the country where it operates. Site inspections may be carried out by local inspectors who must be trained by the certification agency prior to their field assignment

In case an operator certified by a non-IFOAM certification agency wishes to sell to an IFOAM certified trader, the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria allows for a process called Certification Transference. A Certification Transference Evaluation (CTE) is an evaluation by IOAS of a non-IFOAM accredited certifier whose operators wish to supply ingredients or finished products for further processing or sale by operators of an IFOAM Accredited certifier. The evaluation involves both document review and a site visit which will include operator visits.

10.5 Mechanism not to Allow an Interest Group to Dominate the Process, nor Be Dominated by Others

Involved in a certification system are two major interest groups: the operators who desire their agricultural produce to be certified as organic; and the certification bodies who desire that operators buy into their certification system. IFOAM members, being the potential clients, would have the opportunity to manipulate the system to their own advantage had they accorded to their own organization - IFOAM - the authority to certify. IFOAM hurdled this obstacle by:

- enabling all members to participate in setting the IFOAM Basic Standards and the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria
- outsourcing the certification process to independent certification bodies

- delegating to an independent body, IOAS, the regulation and supervision of certification bodies

On the other hand, certification bodies could also have vast opportunities to manipulate the system if:

- they were the only ones who determined the standards for organic trade
- the criteria for accrediting certification bodies were left to their own judgment
- there was no oversight body to regulate and supervise them

To avoid these results, IFOAM enables its members to establish and continuously review the IFOAM Basic Standards (IBS) and the accompanying Code of Organic Trade, and the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria (IAC). The IBS sets the standards for certifying IFOAM members, while the IAC provides the basis for authorizing certification bodies to act as accredited certification bodies of IFOAM. This implies that the target clientele of certification bodies are themselves knowledgeable about the standards used for organic certification. In case the operator has not been up to date on the changes / revisions of the standards, it is the responsibility of the certification agency to inform the operator of such revisions.

In this scheme, it is highly costly for any party to manipulate the system. Any IFOAM member-operator who wishes to influence the system must first convince the more than 700 IFOAM member-operators to allow the insertion of specific provisions in the IBS and the IAC, which might increase his own benefits. The same costly process will apply to a certification body which might spouse a specific provision in the IFOAM standards and/or criteria for its sole benefit.

The IAC itself has stringent provisions to ensure the impartiality and objectivity of accredited certification bodies.

Stakeholder opinion:

Most of the stakeholders contacted (specially certification bodies and promotional organizations) indicated that their organizations are involved in the process of setting policies and standards for IFOAM. The certified organic producers/processors who are not IFOAM members are not involved in any process in IFOAM scheme. It would be necessary for IFOAM to promote its scheme to reach producer level.

Our opinion as a national certifying body:

In our opinion the positive point is that participation is open for all the stakeholders involved in organic production from producers to traders and the civil society. However membership of IFOAM is constraint for participation in the process of setting policies and standards for IFOAM.

The ground realities are that majority of the NGOs, producer groups; small and medium processors and other organizations from the developing countries like India are unable to participate actively in IFOAM system because:

- the process of membership is expensive
- participation in conferences/workshops/meetings etc. is not feasible as the travel and staying cost is usually very high

- the developing countries also have communication and technical inadequacy, a constraint to actively participate in IFOAM decision-making

The two-tier process of IFOAM may be result oriented in Northern Countries but in India where the organic movement is in initial stage the two-tier system is not effective because of the following reasons:

- presently only one IFOAM accredited certification body is operating in India. The applicant for certification has a very limited choice to enter directly in the IFOAM scheme of certification
- even though there is provision of Certification Transference (CT) the applicants find it time taking and costly. The market opportunities are also some time lost

In our opinion although the IFOAM has number of positive characters but in view of the Indian organic producers, processors or traders the IFOAM scheme does not reflect any specific goodwill in organic market. This may be because the product is acceptable in the market without insistence for IFOAM.

11. Decentralization of Conformity Assessment

In organic agriculture, the system of production requires conformity assessment to satisfy consumers' trust. IFOAM Basic Standards (IBS) are principles and requirements, which when practiced at local levels can be certified by local certifiers, provided they are accredited by IOAS to do so. IFOAM encourages development of local standards by certification bodies and standard-setting organizations, considering variations in interaction between humans, agriculture and ecological conditions. IFOAM criteria for variations detail the circumstances when variations are allowed based on international harmonization necessary for international trade in organic products. The local certifiers are encouraged by IFOAM.

There are approximately 100 organic certification bodies operating worldwide. Many of them have operations in different countries and strategic alliances with other certification bodies. There are also thousands of independent inspectors working on a freelance basis for organic certification bodies. But not all of these agencies are IFOAM accredited. The IFOAM system has 32 accredited certification bodies (23 from the North, and 9 from the South) regulated and supervised by IOAS. These are international certification bodies duly registered and accredited by the respective governments. Some certification agencies that are members of IFOAM do not have IFOAM accreditation. Indeed, a big job lies ahead for IFOAM and other accrediting agencies to harmonize national, regional, and international standards currently being implemented around the world.

The revised IFOAM Accreditation Criteria provides that the certification body shall have clear division of the functions of certification, inspection, and appeals. The function of inspection can be subcontracted by the certification body to an independent inspector, but the integrity, competence and transparency of any sub-contracted components of the certification system remains the responsibility of the certification body. Certified operators have neither the right to choose nor to recommend inspectors. More importantly, whereas the function of inspection can be subcontracted, the certification decision cannot be subcontracted.

In organic trade International certifiers are preferred because of their goodwill and performances in organic market. To break this monopoly IFOAM under its criteria of accreditation has given considerations to certification partnership acceptance of prior

certification, transfer of certification, acceptance of product based on recognition of a certification body, acceptance of product based on document review. This clearly indicates that decentralization of conformity assessment is very well studied by IFOAM.

Stakeholder opinion:

The feedback received from the certified Indian producer groups is that their certification is carried out by International Certification agencies (through their local auditor), which are mainly accredited under EU and USA Regulations. Most of the certifications are carried out under the “Small Holder Group Certification Scheme” which is developed by IFOAM. These certifiers also consider Indian organic standards, which allow sufficient flexibility to local conditions.

A few stakeholders who are promoting Organic Agriculture also opined that IFOAM Guarantee scheme allows sufficient flexibility for local certification bodies to adopt standards and inspection system catering to local conditions.

Our opinion as a national certifying body:

Earlier, few international certification bodies were inspecting and certifying Indian producers after visiting the operation and the certification decision taken by the certification body abroad. The scenario has now changed because of decentralization of conformity assessment. The following examples are indicative:

- international certification bodies like SKAL International, IMO Control are authorizing the locally appointed/contracted agencies in India. The certification decision is taken by these appointed/contracted agencies for grant of certificate which result in saving time in the process of certification. It also reduces the certification cost
- ECOCERT International, Naturland, Bio.inspecta, LacongmBH provides organic certification through local auditors contracted by them. But the final certification decision and grant of certificate is the function and responsibility of the authority at certification body headquarters
- four local certification bodies are operating in India mostly located in big cities and are accredited by the Government of India. None of them is accredited by IFOAM or other international / regional accreditation programme. The cost of certification is significantly lower when operated by these local bodies than by international ones

In our opinion the provision of decentralization of conformity assessment is a good step b y IFOAM, but chances for its misuse, leading to advantage for interested parties to push their product in the market persist. Assessing the commitment of the stakeholders or practitioners to organic farming is very important in certification decision. IFOAM along with decentralization of conformity assessment policy should develop norms to judge commitment in elaborative way so as to prevent potential misuse.

12. Internalization of Environmental and Social Impact Assessment

While drafting the standards IFOAM has given due consideration to safeguard environment by inclusion of standards for ecosystem management, soil and water conservation, common/public land management, animal management. The organic system of agriculture (standards) is required to monitor impact on environmental factors through effects on quality of ecosystem, water conservation, maintaining water quality, using water efficiently and responsibly. Conservation of soil, its flora and fauna - Besides the organic standard considers conservation of biotic and aboitic resources including areas used for rangeland, fisheries, forest, foliage for the bees, neighboring land, air water. Plant diversity is also given importance while drafting standards. Genetic engineering is excluded from organic production and processing.

The IFOAM scheme has internalized the environmental and social impact assessment by drafting mechanism within IFOAM scheme to identify social and environmental impact. The IFOAM Code of Conduct for Organic Trade Guidance Document details the principles related to commitment to Social Justice in organic agriculture, transparency and accountability of negotiations, trading relationship, equitable distribution of returns, communication and information flow, skills development and capacity building, internal ethics and supporting the organic community.

The work on Code of Conduct for Organic Trade is in progress and it is advised that the stakeholders need not address all principles at the same time nor follow any of the suggestion in the guidance document unless it is relevant.

The certification standards based on IBS may include environmental standards in relation to local environment and ecological conditions, which are approved by IFOAM after due considerations and included in IBS to harmonize Organic Standards.

IFOAM took concrete steps in recent years to harmonize IFOAM standards with environmental and social impact assessment by developing the IFOAM Code of Conduct for Organic Trade.

The long history of discussions about socially just standard in IFOAM is still ongoing, and as per IBS Chapter 11, it is recommended that all ILO conventions relating to labour should be complied with.

It is therefore trustworthy from the consumers' opinion that inclusion and impact assessment of environmental may help to reduce or eliminate the harmful effects the environment is facing in industrialized societies.

Though IFOAM has given consideration to environmental and social aspects while drafting the standards and policies, the mechanism to assess the impact at ground / field level is not adequate.

IFOAM could learn from systems like SA 8000 which ensure that implementation of a standards does not adversely affect a stakeholder's livelihood.

Stakeholder opinion:

A producer stakeholder mentioned that there is a positive social and environmental impact of organic certification. But they are unable to pinpoint the exact social impact, as there is no study carried out to assess the same. Regarding environmental impact, producers stated that there is increase in the fertility of soil, and hence increase in productivity over a period of time.

Our opinion as a national certifying body:

- Most of the Indian producers are certified by certification bodies, which are accredited by EU, USDA or JAS but not by IFOAM. These regulations do not have provisions for Social Justice like IFOAM. Hence social impact assessment measures are not taken care in the process of organic certification. However the impact would have been different if they operated under IFOAM scheme. Issues like Child Labour could be solved and farm workers would get equal pay for equal work and minimum wages prescribed by the law
- The IFOAM scheme recently introduced the Code of Conduct for Organic Trade and has given a direction to assess the social and environmental impact of organic system
- In our opinion social and environmental impact reflects the success of the system applied. All the international certification systems need to adopt and assess the compliances as given in IFOAM Code of Conduct

13. Mechanisms to Monitor Effectiveness

13.1 Sustainable Development

Monitoring of operator compliance is primarily focused on the reduction of the use of pesticides and chemo-synthetic fertilizers aimed at protecting the environment and human health. To ascertain compliance with IFOAM standards, the certification body has to conduct at least one scheduled visit per year as well as unannounced inspections, which can be conducted without forewarning. In case additional scheduled visits are further required, it should be based on risk analysis taking into account factors such as the type of production, the operator's record of compliance, complexity of production, and risk of non-compliance.

To ensure proper documentation of the operator's processes and practices, the certification body must specify:

- The documentation to be maintained by the operator and which records shall be available and held in a form that enables verification to take place. Such documents shall be the basis for verification of compliance
- The certification body must also require the operator to document procedures, defining the manner of production or processing where the absence of such procedures could adversely affect the organic quality. Such documents are to be kept for a minimum of five years.

Certification bodies maintain effectiveness of organic system under various agro climatic conditions for certification purpose, but the mechanisms (standards, inspection and verification) to study effectiveness factors like yield alone can not determine sustainability as factors like seeds, soil character, climatic condition, water etc. govern it.

The standards used by the certification body cover all production systems or product categories certified. The contract between certification body and the operator should include clauses regarding compliance to the standards, obligation to provide information, and access to the certification body. This may either be achieved through a direct contract between the parties or by an

agreement between the operator and the contracted party in which the contracted party binds itself directly to the certification body.

Risk assessment should be conducted to determine the necessity for, or frequency of, inspection of all storage facilities including transport facilities. Where this is a need for inspection to protect organic integrity, inspection must be done. As regards transport of goods, the party owning the product at the point of transport is held responsible for maintaining the organic integrity in the transport process, unless transport operations are certified in their own capacity.

Certification bodies must require operators to:

- maintain up to date files, which contain all relevant information, including history and product specifications
- keep separate records for major violations and resulting sanctions, precedents, exceptions, appeals, and complaints, in a way that enables easy retrieval of data. The person authorized by the certification body should sign inspection reports, certification decisions, certificates and other relevant records

Periodic internal audits of procedures have to be done in a planned and systematic manner over time to verify that the certification system is implemented and is effective. During these periodic audits, the certification body shall ensure that:

- performance of all personnel including employed inspectors is reviewed
- personnel responsible for the audited functions are informed of the outcome of the audit
- corrective actions are taken in a timely and appropriate manner;
- the results of the audit are documented

Records of the outcome of performance evaluation shall be maintained. In the case of frequently used contracted inspectors, the certification body should provide the inspector periodic feedback of his performance.

13.2 Market Uptake

The IFOAM scheme guaranteeing organic claim is continuously showing upward trend in sale of organic products. The assessment of the impact of certification and its share in present market that uses the labelling system is described in section 16 under impact.

It is likely that increased organic production may have a depressing influence on prices; however, increased consumption may offset any downward pressure on prices. At present consumer awareness of the environmental costs of agriculture (such as deteriorating quality of drinking water and soil and impact of agriculture on landscape and wildlife) is increasing and therefore market uptake is likely to increase. Several governments have introduced subsidies for organic agriculture. Producers of organic products switch to organic agriculture to secure market premiums. But this does not mean that IFOAM scheme has market uptake as consumers trend to buy non-certified organic products if they are available and reasonable priced.

Stakeholder opinion:

Immediate reaction from the certified producer stakeholder is that organic certification is market driven at present, but in long term they feel that it will lead towards sustainable development. They experienced that by using local seeds, production of on-farm bio-fertilizer and bio-pesticides, cost of cultivation is reduced etc. The certification programme and awareness programme based on IFOAM scheme need to be given priority in Indian context. People in India are now slowly converting their farms from conventional to organic. This is a good sign and those who can produce organic are in search of certification scheme to promote the marketing of their products in leading international market. The impacts on social and environmental issues are to be assessed on long-term basis.

While in academic world, at the level of producers the organic market is major attraction. Understanding of social/environmental impact is yet to percolate down to producer level though it is at times visible regarding less use of chemicals or health considerations.

Our opinion as a national certifying body:

It is not possible to quantify the impact on sustainability issues at present.

In our opinion the current status of organic certification scheme is a 'marketing tool' for the certification carried out in India for products, which have demand in international market. Sustainable development is perceived as an important aspect of organic agriculture.

14. Complaint and Dispute Settlement Mechanisms

The IBS are in continuous development as organic farming evolves. The IFOAM Standards Committee is responsible for revisions. Technical issues are referred to subcommittees and members who are specialist in the subject. Members from both developed and developing countries constitute different committees.

The complaints and disputes related to standard setting are entertained by the biannual meeting of the IFOAM General Assembly. All IFOAM members and other interested parties are given an opportunity to comment on complaints and dispute proposals. The IFOAM standards committee then revises the standards and most recent copies are available from IFOAM and IOAS head offices. Complaints and disputes in case of conformity assessment by directly concerned parties.

IBS does not prescribe any standard dispute settlement mechanism to be commonly adopted by accredited certification bodies. Rather, it requires certification bodies to have their own procedures for consideration of complaints brought by operators of third parties concerning the performance of the certification body or concerning the compliance of certified operators with the standards. Such procedures are subject to review and sanction by the IOAS.

Specifically, IFOAM Accreditation Criteria requires the certification body to:

- keep a record of all complaints and resulting corrective actions related to certification
- take appropriate subsequent action
- document the action taken and its effectiveness

IFOAM does not provide any direct sanctions for infractions of the standards, infringement or fraud by the operator. Instead, IFOAM requires certification bodies to have a documented range of sanctions including measures to deal with irregularities. Again, such sanctions for infractions are subject to review and approval of the IOAS. The certification body may withdraw certification from the operator for a specified period in case a serious violation is committed by the operator.

The certification body is responsible for dealing with appeals and complaints of the operator. IFOAM requires the certification body to have procedures for the consideration of appeals against its certification decisions. Such procedures are subject to review and approval by the IOAS. As regards complaints lodged against certified processors and handlers, the certification body shall require the operator to take appropriate action on such complaints which are related to the compliance with certification requirements. It shall also require the operator to keep a record of the said complaints and the corrective action taken.

When a complaint is resolved, documented resolution should be made. The complainant has to be informed of the general outcome of the complaint in way which does not prejudice the confidence of the party concerned. This ensures a fair hearing to all the concerned.

Stakeholder opinion:

None of the stakeholders we contacted had a dispute or the need to complain about the organic certification scheme.

Our opinion as a national certifying body:

In our opinion while complaint and dispute settlement mechanism is well set in IFOAM, in practice most stakeholders are not fully aware of procedures. Even those who are aware do not complain as it is time consuming and expensive. It is difficult to locate and communicate with IFOAM offices if the stakeholders do not have IFOAM offices in their country and do not have access to computers. It would be desirable if IFOAM and certification bodies make the procedure available in local languages and also have electronic system in place for this.

15. Public Reporting

Public access to information is a vital factor for a multi-stakeholder, decentralized certification system such as that of IFOAM. This is clearly provided for in the IFOAM Accreditation Criteria (IAC). At the outset, the IAC requires certification bodies to maintain a documented system for the control of all documentation relating to the certification system. More specifically, certification bodies are required to make publicly available, through print and or electronic media, current information on the following:

- information, where relevant, describing the authority under which the certification body provides its certification service
- the requirements and procedures, or a description of the procedures for evaluation of the inspection report and approval, continuation or extension of certification
- the requirements and procedures for suspension and withdrawal of certification
- standards

- a description of the certification body's sources of income and clear indications of the fees charged to applicants and current licensed operators
- a description of the rights and duties of applicants and suppliers of certified products, including requirements, restrictions or limitations on the use of the certification body's logo and on the ways of referring to the certification granted
- procedures for handling complaints and appeals
- a current list of certified operators, including name and location and the scope of the certification
- a current listing of contracted production, although this may be a general list without linkage to the certified operator.

For the purposes of document control certification bodies are also required to ensure that:

- the current issues of the appropriate documentation are available at relevant locations
- all changes of documents are covered by the correct authorization
- all changes are processed in a manner which will ensure direct and speedy action
- superseded documents are removed from use throughout the organization and its agencies
- all affected parties are notified of the changes
- there is a register of all appropriate documents with the respective issue identified
- there is a determination of which documents are available to the public and which are not

The Guidance Document of the Code of Conduct also provides practical guidelines for meeting both producer demands for information and consumer demands for information, as detailed below.

15.1 Meeting Producer Demands for Information

- Producer information needs can be identified by entering into a dialogue with producer partners and could include demands for market information, trading practices and quality improvement and processing techniques
- traders and certification bodies can act as information conduits and seek information from further up the supply chain on issues such as consumer preferences, which are useful to producers. Again it is important that distinctions should be made between public and private information shared between supply chain partners.
- a more structured system of information exchange between supply chain partners could be established to track the product throughout the supply chain and inform all partners of the final retail price of the product

15.2 Meeting Consumer Demand for Production Information

- Supply chain partners can work together to identify the key information needs of consumers and develop an information profile for consumers which includes details of key issues surrounding production, monitoring, processing and trade
- the responsibility for making this information available to consumers should be with the retailers who can make it accessible to consumers either upon request or by including key facts on any labelling/display/brochure
- supply chain partners may decide to make their information profiles available to end consumers by publishing information on their websites or through other means

As a mandatory requirement certification body should make available the following information to producers /operators and ensure as a part of organic system that producers/operators adhere to the following:

- comply with national, state and local authority environment regulations wherever, applicable
- comply with national rules and regulations of production, marketing and labeling in the respective country
- comply with all ILO conventions relating to labour and the UN Charter of Rights for Children
- comply with food processing standards in the respective country e.g. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Prevention of Food Adulteration (PFA)
- comply with national law for use of conventional veterinary wherever, applicable
- export Rules and Regulations of Government

Stakeholder opinion:

The stakeholders mentioned that the certification bodies provide them relevant information and documents, rules and procedures for certification, applicable standards, certification templates and fee tariff. The stakeholders can also assess the information such as rights and obligations, procedure to complaint and appeal and certain policies of certification body etc. on request from CB.

Our opinion as a national certifying body:

In India we have a number of regional languages, and English is not widely used, hence it is difficult for the producer groups to understand the rules and regulations and other information. Information that is available through electronic media is still not very accessible in India and hence not accessible to the stakeholders. This limits the areas of small producers. The same could be true in other third world countries.

ECL space could consider making promotional material like audio / videocassettes in bilingual form (Hindi / English) so that it is easy to reach out to small producers in a cost effective way.

16. Impacts

16.1 Percent of Market Share that Uses the Labelling System

International Trade Centre (ITC) estimates show that retail sales volume of organic foods has reached an average amount of US$17.3 billion in 2000 for three major destinations – Europe (42.2%), U.S.A. (44.8%), and Japan (13.0%). ITC figures further show that retail sales volume of organic foods grew to an estimated US$20.75 billion in 2001, with Europe's share remaining the same at 42.2%, U.S.A.'s share slightly dropping to 44.5%, and Japan's share modestly increasing to 13.2%. Against this backdrop, it is expected that the multi-billion dollar organic industry will continue to experience exponential growth in the next five years. In less than three years, the total participation of organic retail sales in the food retail segment will grow from 1.4% to 3.3% (average) in Europe.

An important factor contributing to the growth of the organic industry is the increasing participation of large retailers and grocery store chains in the distribution of organic foods worldwide. This trend is likely to continue in the future. It should not be surprising, therefore, to see the organic industry turning "mainstream" in the years ahead.

Another contributory factor to the organic industry's growth is the differentiation of its products in the market place. Organic growers are expected to complement their organic certification with other types of quality, food safety social and environmental certification programs to diversify its market outreach. It is quite likely that operators will not only seek organic certification but also fair trade certification, thus gaining greater market advantage. However it is not possible to quantify IFOAM's share as there would be multiple accreditation, which lead to slewed data.

The continuing growth of the organic industry will boost organic production. It is the success of organic market in general but IFOAM's contribution towards the growth can be neglected as IFOAM plays an important role in harmonization of organic standards worldwide and promotion of organic activities.

16.2 The Present Status of IFOAM Labelling in India

For export market of organic food, Government of India has prescribed that all certification bodies operating in India should be accredited by NPOP, India.

Presently there are eleven certification bodies including four domestic bodies operating in India. Out of these only Naturland (Germany) is accredited by IFOAM and permitted to use IFOAM seal in its own promotional materials. Whereas, local organic market is not regulated in India by any statutory body.

Local products, produced by using traditional and indigenous organic methods of agriculture (without using artificial chemicals) are sold after labeling as 'organic' in some of the metropolitan cities in India. The local market figures are very difficult to obtain in view of the above and % market share of IFOAM scheme in India cannot be determined exactly at this juncture.

16.3 Absolute Market

In 2001, ITC estimated the total number of certified areas devoted to organic production to have reached 17,156,455 hectares. The top three regions in terms of certified areas devoted to organic production in 2001 were Oceania (44.9%), Europe (24.8%), and South and Central America (21.7%). Certified areas in the U.S. accounted for 7.7% of the total production areas. Asia and Africa have much catching up to do, accounting respectively for only 0.5% and 0.3% of total organic production.

In India, area under major crop is 584.80 Million Hectares and agricultural production from the same is 1170.10 Million Tonnes. To date, a total of 2.508826 Million Hectares of land is certified as “Organic” including 2.432500 Million Hectares under wild herbs from states Madhya Pradesh and Utter Pradesh. A total of 119,656 Tonnes quantity of food is certified as “Organic”. Out of which only 6792 Tonnes (Valued approx. US$15.48 million) of organic food is exported. As evident from the above data only a fraction of the total figures are certified as a ‘Organic’. Therefore the impact of organic can be considered as negligible at present.

Source: APEDA Ministry of Commerce, Govt. of India, Department of agriculture and Co-operation, Govt. of India

Case Study: Ambootia Tea Estate, India

The following case study symbolizes the impact of organic agriculture on environment, economy, social status, institutional impact, problems and obstacles of a stakeholder.

Ambootia Tea Estate, India holding 350 hectares of land was a major contributor to Darjeeling tea industry, but suffered declining yields. The decline in yield was from 206 tonnes to 171 tonnes from 1989 to 1991 under the conventional method of farm management. The Ambootia Tea Estate was then converted to organic and finally biodynamic system from the year 1994. The grand impact of organic management was visible since then such as;

- Increase in soil fertility (by use of legumes, green manures and compost)
- Soil Erosion check (by contouring soil cover, cutting)
- Natural predators population increased (increase in ladybirds controlling trips / aphids, red spider, mites)
- Soil became more moisture retentive (led to more stable yield in dry weather).

The Environmental Impact:

- 50,000 trees planted every year (this plant diversity helped to form habitat for predators and reduced soil erosion)
- Respiratory disease were down
- Estate was able to restart landslide rehabilitation programme (out of premiums gained on production).

Economic Impact:

- Estate has to increase about by 35% (generated employment for labourers).
- Biodynamic preparations were used on the farm, thus, increasing the production of herbs, its collection of bio mass cow dung for composting involved large number of workers as the IFOAM system advocates development of a largely closed system.
- Estate applies 2100 tonnes of compost every year and this helped to employ workers to keep cows, which helped in increasing income of workers.

Social Impact:

- After conversion to organic and biodynamic management, past lockout problems were eliminated (this was a regular feature in 1981 to 1986). A sense of stability, good relations between workers and management was established and was further stimulated by fair trade registration.
- All statutory labour requirements were met, a joint body of workers and management led to decide on welfare programmes using product - premia. A sport, recreation centers, investments in education, availability of computers, and introduction of scholarship schemes was possible. A garbage collection scheme introduced was helpful to maintain hygiene around the estate.

Institutional Impact:

- Estate has become a strong organization as it was then run on cooperative basis. Manager of the estate is the funding chairman of the Bio-organic Tea Association in India, which has assisted in promoting the organic messages to Government and other promotional organizations.

Problems/Obstacles:

- Problems were envisaged in the beginning years of the conversion period and heavy investments were required. The yield drop was from 487kg/ha (1994) to 404 kg/ha (in 1996) about 17% reductions.
- This drop and loss was compensated by premiums obtained because of organic and Fair Trade status. Fair and assured prices kept the estate viable.

Source: Bansul S, September 1997 The Future Agenda for Organic Trade–IFOAM ConferencePro-

ceedings.

Learning and implication for ECL Space project

The recent move of IFOAM to harmonize its standards with social accountability and social justice/ethical issues has far reaching implications for the ECL Project. Firstly, it indicates a need in the certification and labelling movement for integrating global social and environmental standards into their existing sector-specific standards. Secondly, IFOAM's Code of Conduct for Organic Trade provides practical guidelines on how organic traders, operators, and certification bodies can respond to social and environmental requirements.

Finally, IFOAM's experience profoundly argues the case for a global ECL initiative. The shortcomings of IFOAM's attempts at harmonizing its standards with social and environmental requirements can be overcome by integrating sector-specific initiatives into a global ECL initiative.

It can be inferred that IFOAM's move to improve the socially and environmentally responsible practices of its operators, traders, and certification bodies is aimed at improving market access and market uptake of the organic movement worldwide. With a market share of 1.5 to 2.0 percent of food sales and an expected industry medium-term growth of l0-20%, there is much room in the market for expansion of organic food as well as other organic products. This motivation finds common ground with the ECL project, which suggests the great advantage of bringing in IFOAM as a valuable ally in carrying out the ECL project

In addition, IFOAM offers a sound model of a neutral multi-stakeholder process which the ECL project envisages to adopt. This is another big advantage for both IFOAM and the ECL project to work together.

What IFOAM lacks is the ECL's mission to support sustainable development by providing or endorsing guidelines through a neutral multi-stakeholder process. The goal of sustainable development is close to the hearts of IFOAM members in the South, and yet this is not squarely addressed by IFOAM. Tackling the issue of sustainable development would attract greater participation of stakeholders from developing countries in the organic movement. It can, therefore, be argued that the ECL project has tremendous value added to IFOAM by opening new opportunities towards further expansion of the organic movement's influence and stakeholder participation.

Stakeholder opinion:

The propagation of IFOAM scheme and resultant increase in demand for organic produce has resulted in the following:

- reduced cost of production on account of saving on fertilizers, chemicals etc.
- increase in soil fertility, which in the long run would lead to increase in productivity
- safety from harmful effects of chemicals
- but it increases labour costs to a certain extent

17. Incentives / Barriers to adoption

17.1 Regulatory Incentives

In the Asian context, not many governments have committed resources to organic production as the productivity levels of subsistence farms were sought to be increased through use of subsidized fertilizers and chemicals. It is only in recent times that governmental policy is undergoing change in countries like India.

The Indian Government has taken cognizance of organic farming since 2000. A regulatory framework for the proper certification and export promotion is in place but there is no regulatory authority for domestic consumption.

A document on a 'National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP)' was published in 2000 and in May 2001 a document on the 'National Accreditation Programme' was released. These documents were prepared on the basis of the guidelines evolved by international organizations such as, IFOAM, EU Regulations and Codex Alimentarius. A logo 'India Organic' was released in July 2002 under Organic Products Certification Mark Regulation, 2002. The areas covered under NPOP are:

- standards (national)
- accreditation programme for certification bodies
- training of farmers
- establishing model farms
- assistance for setting up commercial production units
- setting up a National Institute for Organic Agriculture
- regional centers of National Institute for Organic Farming.
- programmes for states in looking out for organic markets
- model schemes on organic farming
- bio–village
- bio pesticides development
- to introduce suitable regulation over burning of crop residues

Examples of initiatives taken by government:

The Provincial Govt. of Himachal Pradesh is encouraging fruit growers in the state to shift to organic fertilizers and biological pest control. It is also considering setting up a laboratory for research into biological control methods in agriculture.

Provincial Govt. of Madhya Pradesh has plan to set aside 50% of its land for organic farming and initiated the organic farming promotional activities at village level covering about 3000 hectares in the 939 villages

17.2 Financial Incentives

- Government of India offers 50 % subsidies for organic producers and processors on organic certification during the conversion period
- tax exemptions for entrepreneurs engaged in production of vermi-compost, compost, press-mud and other organic inputs
- financial support to farmers engaged in organic farming through development of various schemes
- government farms / Krishi Vigyan Kendras would set up vermicompost units
- tio gas programme is promoted under non-conventional energy scheme

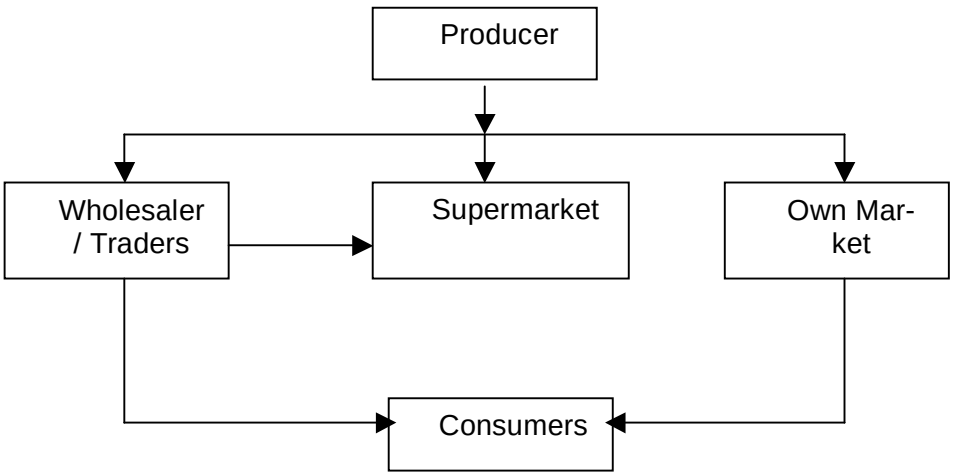
In India domestic organic market exists for very specific products such as organic rice, wheat, tea, coffee, pulses, fruits and vegetables. The higher prices for organic products are encouraging farmers to go 'Organic' and there is increasing demand in big towns from health consensus consumers. Today domestic market consumes about 8% of organic produce and the percentage is likely to increase. This will result in reducing dependence on export and also increase in average demand for organic production.

Product	Organic (Price Rs. /Kg.)	Conventional (Price Rs. /Kg.)
Rice	32-110	15-60
Wheat	35-40	15-25
Coffee	475-1000	350-500
Tea	450-1300	250-500
Spices	400-1500	250-800
Pulses	50-75	25-40
Fruits	80-100	20-100

Price Comparisons of organic and conventional products

(Indian domestic market) (1US$ = 46 Indian Rupees)

Distribution of organic products takes place as follows



As most organic products originates from small farmers, wholesalers/traders account for 60% share distribution of organic products. Supermarket / owned stalls are used by large organized producers. These are the main marketing channels for organic products.

Product	Sale (Tonnes)
Tea	100
Coffee	50
Rice	250
Wheat	200
Pulses	50
Fruits and vegetable	400
Total	**1050**

Domestic organic product sales (2002)

17.3 Alternative Market

The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), an undertaking of the Government of India, has initiated its efforts towards establishing a brand called 'Deshi Ahar' which means the food manufactured using all indigenous and traditional methods. These are conventionally grown without use of artificial chemicals but are not certified by any certification body as either the producers are located in remote areas or are poor and can not afford certification cost. As they unaware of the benefits of marketing their products under certified organic label, they prefer to sell their produce to KVIC at a premium.

KVIC has identified such producers (who follow the above said methods) and procures the products by paying premium. They have established sales outlets all over India and market the products under the banner 'Deshi Ahar' up to the turnover of Rs. 2 Crores (US $ 0. 4347 million). However these are not certified organic products.

The learning for ECL Space here is to promote certification in areas where CBs have not reached so that more organic products would be available.

ECL Space should promote universal certification requirements as in countries like India there are no certification requirement for domestic markets.

17.4 Barriers

1. In hilly regions, tribal areas and other marginal regions, many small farmers are de facto organic producers. Out of necessity they have turned degraded lands into productive organic systems that meet local needs. Surpluses are sold in village level market as conventional products. There is great potential to certify their products as 'organic', but due to lack of awareness, technical adequacy, support from Government and NGOs, this potential is unexplored.
2. Being a 'niche' market organic produce is sold at 'conventional' if there is no demand for organic.
3. Lack of harmony and equivalency in certification system is one of the major obstacles of organic trade and one of the reasons why cost burden of certifications are so high. The larger organic markets (US, EU and Japan) have implemented their own national policies and regulations to control trade of organic products. So far, they are seen as an obstacle to trade as the producer has to get multiple certifications. Due to the high cost of certification most of the producers hesitate to go for organic certification. NPOP has not had any major impact so far as it has still not acquired equivalency with other national or regional regulations and in domestic markets certification is not required.
4. In developing countries, policies/scheme for organic agriculture are export oriented. However, these developments can benefit only a few private initiatives, while the common producer community is not able to take advantage of these schemes.
5. Although there is an IFOAM Accreditation Programme Criteria for Small Holders Certification, there is no general agreement on how inspection and certification of Small Holders should be organized. This often implies high costs to producers.
6. The certification procedures are quite time consuming and cumbersome and producers lose market opportunities if they had not adhered to all requirements on time.
7. The whole inspection and certification industry has been developed in a western style, with their ideas on how to ensure quality, how to create confidence, how to be independent and so forth. This often corresponds poorly with traditions, culture and existing infrastructure in developing countries. For most of the producers, the requirements are very difficult (for e.g. in many developing countries no official maps are available, and even if there are maps, many people are not trained to use them in a relevant way), to comply with.

Stakeholder opinion:

The organic producers are receiving a price premium ranging between 5 to 30 % on certified products in world organic market. The dependence on export market and non-availability of local market to the required quantum are the main constraints for organic producers. Some of the producer groups, who combined organic certification with fair trade criteria are receiving guaranteed premium.

The producers stated that the trade can be better organized, if government incentives are adequate. IFOAM does not have a role in this.

Our opinion as a national certifying body:

As a certification body we visualize that the present government polices and initiatives in promotion of organic Agriculture are limited to a section of market trade (export). The organic movement as such is not infiltrated up to the grass root level effecting the self certification capabilities on the part of individual farmers and their groups.

The barriers for going entire organic or making organic farming as a life style are many from education to trade. Understanding the entire process of certification and obstacles coming in the way require to be taken in to account while formulating grant of incentives which may be of financial, regulatory, environmental, social etc. in nature.

The markets may expand due to increasing health awareness and instances of health hazards due to chemicals.

Most of the Indian producers / operators prefer to get their products certified by regulatory conformity systems like EU Regulation or USDA rather than private conformity systems such as IFOAM. This is on account of regulatory incentives and means that participation in IFOAM conformity systems is adversely affected if it is not mandatory.

We would like recommend that ECL Space should undertake an exercise to find alternative ways for certification that would appeal to western markets but would also cater to local cultures and needs. It should also promote 'universal' certification system that means compulsion of certification for domestic organic markets.

18. Success of the IFOAM Scheme Against its Aims and Activities

The success of IFOAM scheme is demonstrated by the fact that it has attracted all countries in organic agriculture. The impact of this success is also seen in India, basically an agricultural country.

The IFOAM scheme has helped exchange of knowledge and expertise.

The consultative status of IFOAM with UN is a big success to spread the movement all over the world.

IFOAM keeps on revising the IBS particularly in the lines of agricultural production and processing including animal husbandry.

It is also a successful move on the part of IFOAM that it ensures equivalence of certification programme worldwide through its IOAS guaranteeing international organic quality.

The learning from IFOAM's success for ECL Space from this is that standardization and accreditation should be kept as two different arms. This would help in avoiding conflict of interest.

19. Lessons for the ECL Space

1. Stakeholder's representation from the North and South is very well balanced in IFOAM. The system works on democratic line and stakeholders participation in its decision making process and neutralizing interest groups from dominating the process or be dominated by others is very well framed out.

   ECL may learn from IFOAM the art of balancing the process of decision-making between:

   - facilitating consensus among members and
   - taking the vote of members

2. The IFOAM system is a democratic process. The assessment for granting status as 'organic' is confirmed against the rules which are set by stakeholders themselves. The conformity assessment is possible all over the world with reference to IFOAM Basic Standard. The inspection and certification bodies duly accredited directly or indirectly by IFOAM or respective government can carry out the conformity assessment. This is a system, which works at various levels and is evidence about its decentralized character.

   This model should be promoted by the ECL Space, whenever appropriate.

3. The Indian participation in IFOAM Certification and accreditation process is limited. The limitations are the direct fall out of the diverse economic, social cultural factors existing in India. The following factors are the major constraints for participation in IFOAM system:

   - fragmented land holding
   - trust in high yielding conventional method
   - cost of certification

- limited market for organic products
- reluctance to change

Though IFOAM has a broad perspective, it cannot attract the desired participation from a major developing country like India. ECL space has a lesson to learn from this i.e. to make the standards 'attractive' for small producers and promote it in countries like India. It is also necessary to take in to consideration local culture and practices. The following activities might be helpful and can be taken into consideration from the beginning of the project:

- *encourage different types of stakeholder from the developing countries to ensure their active participation*
- *a suitable mechanism may be designed to involve the experts from developing countries in standards setting*
- *before developing the standards/guidelines, it is necessary to identify and study the social, environmental and economic issues of developing countries. Based on this, appropriate changes and necessary provisions may be made in the standards, whenever appropriate*
- *trials can be made to in different developing countries, after standards/guidelines are set to make further improvement and maintain uniformity*
- *create a promotional scheme separately in such way that it can help small producer on how to comply with the standards which will lead them towards the sustainable development*
- *promote local certification, local capacity building (local promotional organization)*
- *promote direct market linkages for international market*
- *promote local market development for such products is very important because not all of the producers or certified products can sell in international market. This alternative market will play a very important role in the success of the scheme*

4. The IFOAM scheme has designed a mechanism to guarantee the Organic claim. This mechanism is elaborative and covers a number of dimensions starting from standards to final endorsement of a product being organic. This scheme is fair, as the factors which are responsible for deviation are taken care by formulating the rules. Organic certification is backed by the precise mechanism involving the monitoring system. On the other hand, though IFOAM advocates social and environmental standards, the mechanism for monitoring the conformity is lacking in IFOAM Scheme. However, in the recent year the 'Code of Conduct for Traders" has been introduced in IFOAM system and it will have impact on social accountability.

   ECL space has a lesson to learn from this that information exchange and consensus building are to be developed for all the relevant players in an ECL space project.

5. IFOAM standards are the reference standards, a framework within which the certifier draft their certifications standards. IFOAM standards are also referred by Codex to settle intergovernmental dispute in organic trade. IFOAM standards are subject to desired changes as the organic movement develops.

   The ECL space to address social and environmental requirements has to co-operate with IFOAM to bring in all the other players in certification business. This is where a neutral multi-stakeholder process such as ECL space project can play pivotal role.

6. There are several barriers to adopt the system. For instance the wild products, the ethically cultivated crops (community in Indian known as 'Jain' are against killing of any creature including minute bacteria), agriculture at remote places, the economic constraint on farmers who are unable to purchase a gram of pesticide or insecticide.

   The learning for ECL space is that this aspect is to be given due consideration.

   Another example is the economic constraint of small producers who are unable to purchase a gram of chemical (pesticides or insecticides) for their crops. All of these types of producers are by default organic but they cannot afford the certification cost even in Small Holder Group Certification Scheme. This means the decision to participate in certification scheme is dependent on other members of the society etc.

   The learning for ECL Space is that when developing the standards/guidelines, local cultural and socio-economic conditions of developing countries should be consider, wherever applicable

7. Further we have to state that developed countries and developing countries have different type of lookout towards the organic industry. The stringent regulation and time-consuming certification process are also the barriers to push Indian organic products in the world trade.

   The learning for ECL space is that it should take a holistic approach for betterment of environment, economic condition, human and animal, so that the precious movement like IFOAM becomes a boon for the entire world.

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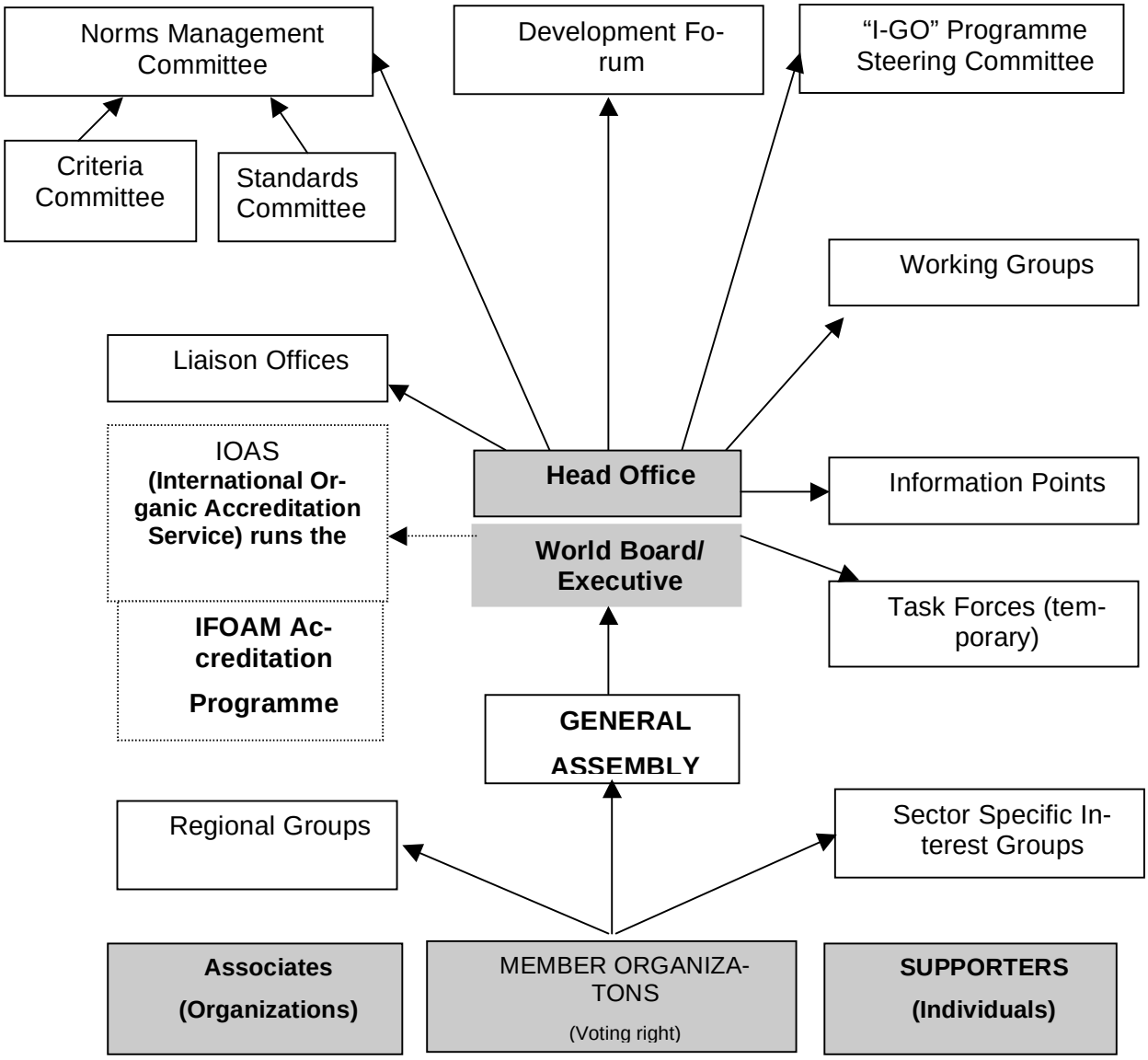
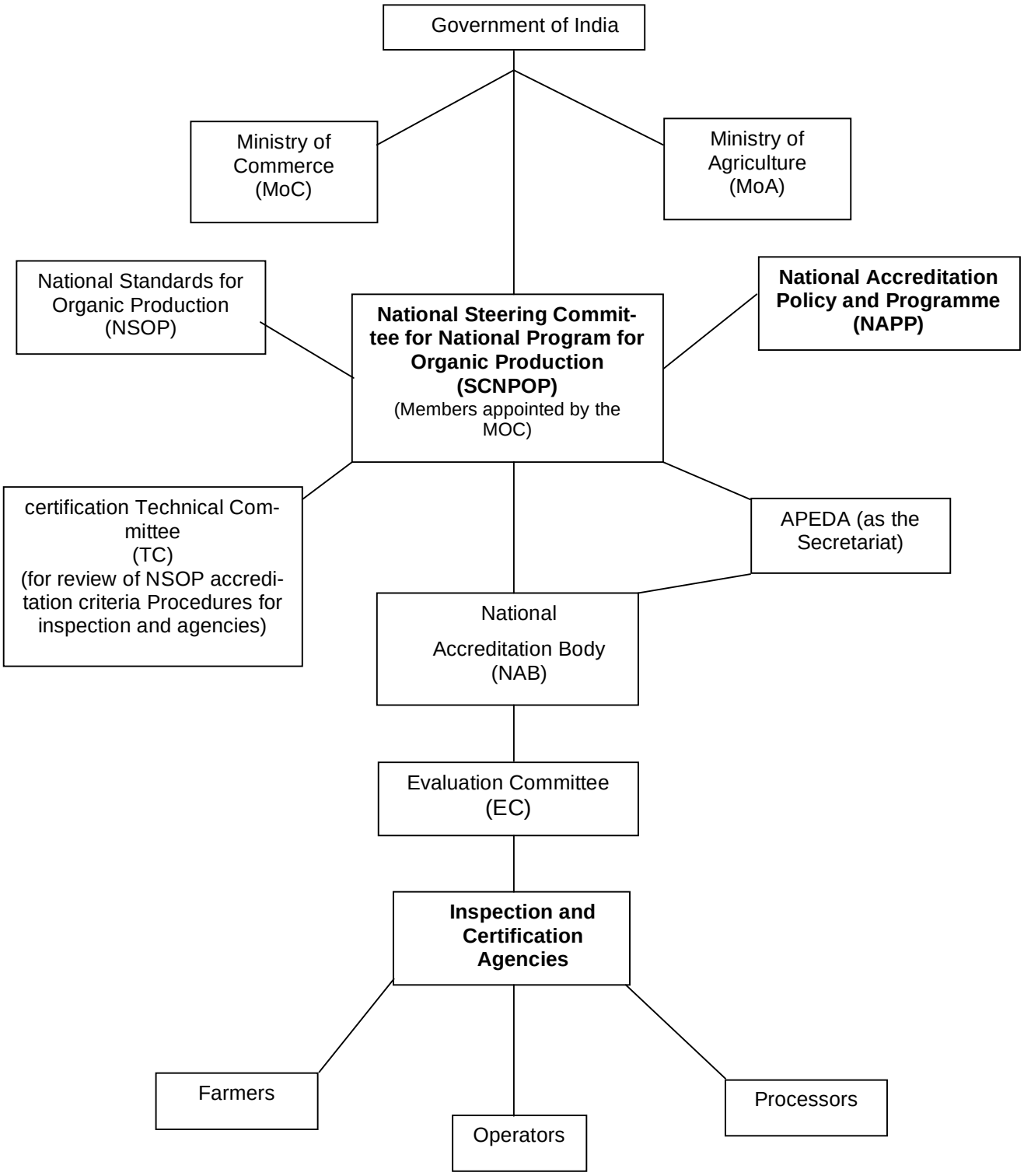
Annex 1: IFOAM Organizational Chart



Annex 2: NPOP Operational Structure

Operational Structure of National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP), India



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