

UNCTAD-FAO-IFOAM International Task Force on Harmonization and Equivalence in Organic Agriculture

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Why?

Plethora of government OA regulations and private OA standards and conformity assessment systems:

- Acting as brake to international OA trade
- Identified as key export challenge for developing countries

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The ITF is

An open-ended platform for dialogue between private and public institutions involved in regulatory activities in the OA sector

Objective: to facilitate trade in OA products, particularly from developing countries

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The ITF

- Reviews existing OA standards, regulations and conformity assessment systems.
- Discusses and formulates proposals for the consideration of governments, Codex, FAO, UNCTAD, IFOAM, etc on mechanisms to promote harmonization of these.
- Provides information on the above.

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ITF meetings

Creation of ITF recommended by Conference on International Harmonization and Equivalence in OA in February 2002

ITF meetings:

- Feb 2003, Nuremberg
- Oct 2003, Geneva
- Nov 2004, Rome
- Feb 2005, Nuremberg
- Dec 2005, Hammamet, Tunisia

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ITF has identified

- Criteria for the assessment of solutions for harmonization
- 3 main areas for attention: rationalization of
 - standards
 - conformity assessment requirements at certification level
 - approval mechanism of certification bodies

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ITF has identified

- A proposal based on one international standard, one international conformity assessment requirement, and an array of possible mechanisms for recognition of certification bodies
- A number of considerations requiring further attention & investigation

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ITF papers

- Volume 1 of background papers published in February 2005
- “Solutions paper” revised after Nov 2004 & Feb 2005 ITF meetings
- New papers to be discussed in Dec 2005 on requirements for certification bodies, cooperation between CABs, common regulatory objectives for organic norms

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ITF website

www.unctad.org/trade_env/itf-organic

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Thank you!

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