



# Statutes

of an international federation that joins the efforts of its members to further Organic Agriculture as an ecologically, socially and economically sound and sustainable system of farming.  
to promote throughout the world the production of high quality food sufficient to feed all people, while protecting the soils and enhancing their fertility, as well as minimising environmental pollution and the use of non-renewable natural resources,

## **1. Name, Seat, Language**

The name of the federation is "IFOAM - International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements". It is registered in Bonn, Germany and carries in Germany the indication "eingetragener Verein," abbreviated "e.V.," after the name. The seat of the federation is situated in Bonn, Germany.

The official language of the federation is English, except in dealings with German authorities, in which case it is German.

## **2. Statutory Purposes**

The purpose of the federation is to protect ~~humankind~~, nature and the environment by promoting Organic Agriculture.

~~The federation is leading, uniting and assisting the organic movement in its full diversity. Its goal is the worldwide adoption of ecologically, socially and economically sound systems that are based on the principles of Organic Agriculture. IFOAM promotes throughout the world the production of high quality food sufficient to feed all people, while protecting the soils and enhancing their fertility, as well as minimizing environmental pollution and the use of non-renewable natural resources.~~

Toward this end the Federation may provide, for example, for the exchange of knowledge and ideas among its members, the information of the public, representation in parliamentary and administrative rule-making, the development and permanent revision of Standards for Production, Processing and Trading Standards. It may for that purpose support global and transnational regional co-operative efforts and develop a common generic logo to be used by IFOAM-accredited certifying organisations.

The Federation pursues the public interest solely and directly. Its activities are benevolent only. It does not engage in activities primarily intended to accumulate capital. Its funds must be used exclusively for statutory purposes. Its members may not benefit from payments by the Federation, which are not covered by the scope of its purpose, or from payments which are disproportional.

## **3. Affiliation**

There are three categories of affiliation with the Federation: member (with voting right), associate and supporter (without voting right).

Affiliation as member or associate is open to organisations including but not limited to farmers, producers, processors, traders and consumers as well as to those engaged in research, education, training, consulting, certifying, promoting and advocacy.

All members and associates must actively pursue the Federation's objectives. The activities of members must be predominantly consistent with the statutory purposes and standards of the Federation. Members must be prepared to provide proof of compliance with the membership requirements.

Organisations which do not meet the activities requirements for members may affiliate as associates. Individuals may affiliate as supporters. The Board decides upon admission of members and associates. It may expel affiliates that act against the Federation's objectives or interests. Affiliates may cancel their membership by means of a written statement.

All disputes between IFOAM and its affiliates related to affiliation status which may occur in the context of these statutes or with reference to their validity will be finally decided upon, without the possibility of recourse to legal action, according to the arbitration rules of the German Institution for Courts of Arbitration (DIS) which form an essential part of these statutes.

Place of the arbitration process is Bonn, Germany; the court of arbitration is formed by one single arbitrator; the substantive law to be applied is German law; the language of the arbitration process is English.

## **4. Organs**

The Federation's organs are the General Assembly, the World Board and the Executive Board. The Executive Director carries out their decisions.

## **5. General Assembly**

A regular General Assembly is held every three years. It is announced in writing by the World Board. On the written request of 25 % of the members or the World Board an extraordinary General Assembly is called.

General Assemblies must be announced three months in advance.

The General Assembly elects a Chair. Decisions of the General Assembly are recorded in Minutes, which are signed by one member of the Executive Board, who was present at the GA. The refereed minutes shall be sent to each affiliate.

The quorum shall be established by at least 25 per cent of the members represented at the opening of the General Assembly. In case the General Assembly will not meet the established quorum of 25 per cent a call for a second General Assembly (subsequent assembly) with identical agenda has to be sent out together with the call for the General Assembly (primary assembly). No quorum will be required for the subsequent assembly. The subsequent assembly may take place one hour after and at the same place of the primary assembly. The simultaneous call for the subsequent assembly has to explicitly clarify that the subsequent assembly will have a quorum independent from the number of members represented.

The General Assembly votes by simple majority. Members have one vote each. Representatives have to prove their authorisation and the payment of their membership fee on request. If they cannot do so, they may not vote. Voting is open or by secret ballot, if so requested by one member. Votes by written proxy are permitted, but restricted to a total of five votes per person.

IFOAM members and the World Board may submit motions to the General Assembly. Motions from members must be proposed to the World Board at least 120 days before the session of the General Assembly. Motions must be sent out at least 60 days before the session of the General Assembly. Motions from the floor may only amend the aforementioned motions. Adopted motions must be implemented. Once adopted, the content of a motion can only be changed by a new motion at the next General Assembly.

The GA or the WB may decide that GA votes may be executed in writing and may be transmitted electronically; this includes votes for the election of an officer or board member. Votes may be cast in person, by mail, by fax, by email or by using an internet portal. The Executive Board shall appoint a natural person to carry out the voting procedure. This person shall also convey the voting results to the voting members in a suitable form. Voting members shall receive the ballot as well as information about the deadline, address and method for submitting the votes at least 30 working days before the deadline for casting the votes. Ballots sent by air mail are considered received 4 days after depositing it with the postal system. To consider: A vote is considered cast on the day it is delivered personally, deposited with the postal system as airmail, or sent electronically.

## **6. Elections**

Every regular General Assembly elects ten World Board members. Candidacies must be received at least three months before the regular General Assembly and must be endorsed by five members. A presentation of the candidates must be sent to the members at least 60 days before the General Assembly.

The World Board chooses an Executive Board (see § 8) from amongst the elected members before the end of the General Assembly. The World Board may co-opt up to three further World Board members. The World Board may elect additional Executive Board members and replace them as appropriate during the term.

## **7. World Board**

The World Board decides all issues not yet determined by the General Assembly. The World Board establishes rules of procedure for the World and Executive Board and the General Assembly, which are to be approved by the General Assembly. The World Board may set up Working Groups, Committees, and regional or thematic task groups. It may also delegate specific tasks to such bodies or to individuals. The World Board takes decisions by simple majority with at least half of the members present and by open vote. On the request of three World Board members a meeting is called with six weeks notice.

## **8. Executive Board**

The Executive Board is constituted by three members of the World Board: The President and two Vice-Presidents. The Executive Board represents the Federation, executes the decisions of the General Assembly and World Board, decides on issues not yet decided upon by the General Assembly or the World Board, reviews the organisation performance and initiates the remedy of short-comings. Executive Board decisions are taken by simple majority with at least half of the members present and by open vote; IFOAM is legally represented by two members of the Executive Board acting jointly.

## **9. Executive Director**

The World Board may appoint an Executive Director (ED), and may install an office, which executes the decisions of the Federation's organs under guidance by the Executive and the World Board.

## **10. Amendments, Modifications**

The World Board may unanimously pass provisional amendments of these statutes that remain in force until the relative decision is taken by the next General Assembly. Any such amendments have to be made known to all members at least three months before they are implemented. Any modification of the statutes proposed

by the World Board should be sent to the members not less than two months before the next General Assembly. A majority of two-thirds of the votes given is required to amend the Statutes.

### **11. Finances**

Affiliation fees are fixed by the General Assembly. The World Board submits a financial report covering the period since the preceding General Assembly to every regular General Assembly. This report is to be approved by an auditor installed by the World Board. The members of the World Board are not personally liable for the Federation's debts. A budget covering the period until the next General Assembly is to be submitted to the General Assembly by the World Board for approval.

When the Federation is terminated its remaining assets shall be transferred to a public interest organization (Körperschaft des öffentlichen Rechts) or to another tax exempted organization in Germany, to be used for tax-deductible purposes specified in these Statutes.

*Approved by the General Assembly in Adelaide, Australia, September 2005  
Latest amended by the World Board in September 2006, Kutztown, USA  
To be presented to the GA 2008, Vignola*