The EU import rules
A move towards more harmonization?

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Initial concept: country to country recognition based on equivalency
Reality:
Majority of import with import permits
## EU import permits since 2008 (selected countries)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Import permits total</th>
<th>Import permits based on local CB’s</th>
<th>Share of local certification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brazil</strong></td>
<td>146</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>52 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>China</strong></td>
<td>315</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ecuador</strong></td>
<td>77</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.03 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Japan</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peru</strong></td>
<td>182</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>21 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tunisia</strong></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>World</strong></td>
<td>2729</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment of current EU import scheme in regard to harmonization

- Preferences European based certification bodies
- In-transparent procedures
- Decided by 25 members states which hardly communicate among each other on assessment procedures
Assessment of new import scheme on its impacts on harmonization
1) Equivalency and compliance

😊 Equivalence procedure is maintained and stressed

😊 Systematic assessment of equivalence with EU standards has to be provided in assessment report

😊 Result of equivalence assessment should be made public by Assessment Body

😊 Assessment is delegated to external bodies (usually accreditation bodies) where guidance or exchange is needed
1) Equivalency and compliance

😊 Compliance procedure will be introduced which contradicts harmonization efforts

😢 No accompanying certificates are required (less bureaucracy for traders)
2.) Guidelines for equivalence assessment

Guidelines for equivalence assessment are provided by Commission.

Reference to Codex Alimentarius in EU Reg. 834/2007

Reference to international tools for harmonization in guidelines, e.g.

UNCTAC, FAO, IFAOM 2008: International Requirements for Organic Certification Bodies (IROCB),

Codex Alimentarius Guidelines CAC/GL 34: „Guidelines for the Development of Equivalence Agreements.“

UNCTAC, FAO, IFAOM 2008: „Guide for assessing equivalence or organic standards…“

References are only in guidelines and not legally binding.
3. Guideline for the notification to a third country authority

😊 Certification bodies have to send letters to authorities in all Third Country where they are operating with information on their activities

😊 Declaration requested that legal requirements in these countries are respected
4. Assessment Bodies

- Assessment reports can be written by:
  - Competent authority
  - National accreditation body with competence in organic agriculture
  - International supervisory body specialised in organic agriculture

- Recognition of an internationally operating body (IOAS)

- Option for accreditation bodies to provide „one stop shops“ (e.g. ISO 65, EU, CAN – IOAS, DAP)

» Definition Equivalence: „... capable of meeting the same objectives and principles“

😊 Locally adapted standards can be elaborated taking into account EU objectives and principles
Conclusions

- An import step towards more harmonization
  - Stressing equivalence
  - More guidance on equivalence assessment
  - References to equivalency tools

- Effectiveness depends on implementation and enforcement
  - Standardsetters and certification body have to use the created leeway
  - Sufficient capacities for coordination, guidance and surveillance are needed
Thank you very much