

Standing Orders

Biodynamic Federation Demeter International

Content

Content	1
1. Scope of application - severability clause.....	2
2. General Part	3
2.1. Quorum and decision-making – Members’ Assembly	3
2.2. Nomination – Members’ Assembly	3
2.3. Reporting and minutes – Members’ Assembly.....	3
2.4. Terms – Members’ Assembly	4
2.5. Membership application and Membership Committee	4
2.6. Passive membership and termination of membership	4
2.7. Fee scale and notification of contributions.....	5
2.8. Appeals Committee and Appeal procedure	5
2.9. Budget	5
2.10. Cooperation between committees and main office.....	6
2.11. Committee and Supervisory Board – General part.....	6
2.11.1. Committees and Supervisory Board – Basic principles.....	6
2.11.2. Committee and Supervisory Board – Guests.....	6
2.11.3. Committees and Supervisory Board – Working method	6
2.11.4. Committees– Voting rights of the Coordinator	7
2.11.5. Committees and Supervisory Board – Confidentiality and conflict of interest....	7
2.11.6. Committees and Supervisory Board – Expense allowances	7
3. Supervisory Board	7
3.1. Purpose, objectives and areas of activity – Supervisory Board.....	7
3.2. Members – Supervisory Board	7
3.3. Chair – Supervisory Board	8
3.4. Working method – Supervisory Board	8
4. Committee for Advisory, Research and Training (ART).....	8
4.1. Purpose, objectives and areas of activity – ART.....	8
4.2. Members – ART	8
4.3. Working method – ART	9
5. International Marketing Committee (IMC).....	9
5.1. Purpose, objectives and areas of activity - IMC	9
5.2. Members - IMC	9
5.3. Working method - IMC	10
6. Committee for Lobby and Public Relations (LPR)	10
6.1. Purpose, objectives and areas of activity – LPR.....	10
6.2. Members – LPR	10
6.3. Working method – LPR	10
7. Standards Committee (SC)	10
7.1. Basic Principles - SC.....	10
7.2. Purpose and objectives - SC	10
7.3. Members – SC	11
7.4. Nomination procedure - SC	11
7.5. Working method –SC	11

7.6.	Quorum and decision making - SC.....	11
7.7.	Amendments to the Standard - SC.....	12
7.8.	New standard categories - SC.....	12
7.9.	Country Exemptions - SC.....	13
8.	Accreditation Council (AC).....	13
8.1.	Purpose and objectives – AC	13
8.2.	Members – AC	14
8.3.	Nomination procedure – AC	14
8.4.	Working method –AC	14
8.5.	Quorum and decision making - AC.....	14
8.6.	Sanctioning - AC	14
9.	International Certification Committee – (ICC).....	15
9.1.	Purpose and objective - ICC.....	15
9.2.	Members - ICC.....	15
9.3.	Working method – ICC	15
9.4.	Decision making – ICC.....	16
9.5.	Sanctioning - ICC.....	16
10.	Trademark Committee (TMC).....	16
10.1.	Purpose, objectives and areas of activity – TMC.....	16
10.2.	Members – TMC.....	16
10.3.	Working method – TMC.....	16
11.	Membership Committee (MC)	16
11.1.	Purpose, objectives and areas of activity	16
11.2.	Members	17
11.3.	Working method.....	17
12.	Procedural Documents.....	17

1. Scope of application - severability clause

a) The present Standing Orders regulate all relevant procedures which are necessary for the overall implementation of the Federation's purposes as formulated in the statutes. This includes all procedures whose amendment is subject to approval by the members. Rules governing the procedures of the committees or the main office for the day-to-day implementation of tasks may be subject to procedural descriptions which do not require members' approval.

b) The members agree to the severability clause. Should individual provisions of these Standing Orders be invalid or void, in whole or in part, or become invalid or void in whole or in part as a result of a change in the law or in supreme court rulings or in any other way, or should these Standing Orders contain loopholes, the Members agree that the remaining provisions of this agreement shall remain unaffected and valid. Furthermore, if objections are made to the language or content of this document by any third party (notary, court, tax office, SSB, etc.) the Members' Assembly authorises the members of the Supervisory Board to adjust the document as needed and to inform the members at the next Members' Assembly. This permission is granted according to § 26 BGB (German Civil Code).

c) If any indications in these Standing Orders are contradictory, the specific wording shall prevail over the general wording.

2. General Part

2.1. Quorum and decision-making – Members’ Assembly

- a) Attendance may be in person, in the form of an approved proxy or in the form of a vote cast in the case of electronic or postal votes.
- b) If attendance is not possible then delegate votes may be transferred by proxy to the delegate of another member. A delegate may not hold more than three proxies.
- c) The possibility to nominate a delegate or to transfer his vote to a joint delegate requires active membership. Active and passive membership is described in Section 2.6. paragraphs c) and d).
- d) Decisions shall be taken by a show of hands, in writing or in electronic form. The number of votes shall be documented to record the result, the votes of the individual delegates is not recorded.
- e) The Members’ Assembly is entitled at any time to replace, expel or re-elect members of organs or bodies before the expiration of the above-mentioned period during an ordinary or extraordinary Members’ Assembly or by electronic voting. In this case, the term of office of the new candidates shall be shortened accordingly, lasting only until the next ordinary election. An extraordinary election requires the approval of the board or a written request of at least one tenth of the delegates and must be communicated to the members at least six weeks before the Members’ Assembly.

2.2. Nomination – Members’ Assembly

- a) The right to nominate candidates is limited to members, delegates, the Supervisory Board, the respective committees and the Section for Agriculture of the School of Spiritual Science. Candidates do not have to belong to or be employed by a member organisation.
- b) The right to nominate candidates for the SC and the AC is restricted to members running a certification scheme (international, national or pgs).
- c) The Supervisory Board appoints a Nomination Committee with five members.
- d) All organs formulate a profile of necessary competences and composition criteria.
- e) The Nomination Committee calls for proposals.
- f) The Nomination Committee assesses the professional qualifications of the candidates and the required composition of the committees. If helpful, the Nominations Committee can interview candidates.
- g) The Nomination Committee can nominate more candidates than there are seats.
- h) The Nomination Committee submits a first proposal to the Supervisory Board for comment. The final proposal of the Nomination Committee is submitted to the Members’ Assembly for election.

2.3. Reporting and minutes – Members’ Assembly

- a) All organs and committees shall report comprehensively on their activities since the last Members’ Assembly at least once a year to the Members’ Assembly. The report may be submitted in writing before or verbally during the Members’ Assembly. In the case of a written report, debate in the plenum will take place when requested.

- b) The General Secretary and the committee coordinator shall report regularly to the Supervisory Board and, on request, to the Members' Assembly on specified topics.
- c) Decisions and elections made by the Members' Assembly must be minuted and signed by both the minute taker and the president of the Federation. These minutes must be approved at the subsequent Members' Assembly.

2.4. Terms – Members' Assembly

- a) The Members' Assembly shall be considered valid if the invitation to attend along with a draft agenda is delivered twelve weeks at the latest before the Members' Assembly. The invitation is sent electronically and delivered to the electronic contact address provided to the association for this purpose.
- b) The minutes of the Members' Assembly must be sent to the members and delegates four weeks after the Members' Assembly at the latest.
- c) Amendments to the standard shall be submitted to the IBDA Executive Board for ratification no later than three weeks after the final vote by the Members' Assembly. All standards changes will be communicated to the certifying member organizations in a German and an English version no later than three months after ratification. All content and editorial changes shall be clearly and unambiguously marked.

2.5. Membership application and Membership Committee

- a) Application for membership must be made in writing to the General Secretary. He/she shall check that the documents are complete and shall forward them to the Membership Committee within four weeks.
- b) The Committee shall review the application to determine if a democratic organisational structure, financial autonomy and compatibility with the objectives of the Federation as set out in the Statutes already exist. If not, then it shall establish a plan with milestones to reach compliance with the criteria and, if necessary, additional requirements and preconditions may be imposed.
- c) The Membership Committee shall make a recommendation to the Members' Assembly concerning membership, when all conditions have been fulfilled.
- d) The recommendation to the Members' Assembly shall be made in writing, at the latest eight weeks before the Members' Assembly.

2.6. Passive membership and termination of membership

- a) Membership may be terminated by the member at the end of the year providing six months' notice has been given. The notice of termination shall be forwarded to the General Secretary.
- b) Membership may be terminated by the Members' Assembly if two-thirds of the delegates vote in favour of exclusion. Reasons for this include:
 - Repeated violations of the Statutes or the Standing Orders of the Federation;
 - Absence from the Members' Assembly for three consecutive years;
 - Absence of membership fees for two consecutive years;
 - Implementation of a biodynamic certification programme without reference to Demeter.

c) The membership can be converted into a passive membership by the Supervisory Board on suggestion of the Membership Committee or the Accreditation Council. Passive members have all rights and duties, but the country's delegate has no voting rights in the Members' Assembly. Reasons for a passive membership include:

- Fees of the previous year being unpaid;
- Missing updated certification data within the framework of accreditation;
- Repeated inactivity regarding requests from the Membership Committee. This includes the implementation of MA decisions.

2.7. Fee scale and notification of contributions

- a) Fee scale of the Biodynamic Federation – Demeter International in its currently valid form shall apply. Amendments to the Fee scale adopted by the Members' Assembly are valid from 1st January of the following year, unless otherwise specified in the motion.
- b) The official submission form of the Federation is to be used for the contribution notification.
- c) All members must have submitted their previous year's turnover to the General Secretary by the 15th May at the latest. They must declare the previous year's license income by the 30th September.
- d) The Executive Board is entitled to agree to instalments or deferrals of the contribution payments with individual members.

2.8. Appeals Committee and Appeal procedure

- a) Appeals must be made in writing within two weeks of receipt of the decision and must state the reasons on which they are based. In the first instance the appeal shall be dealt with by the organ or committee concerned. If the appeal is not upheld, this must also be justified in writing.
- b) In the event of a repeated appeal, it shall be dealt with by the Appeal Committee. The objection must be substantiated in writing and must be made within a period of two weeks after receipt of the first rejection.
- c) The Appeal Committee shall examine the existing documentation and may invite both parties to submit written or oral statements.
- d) The decision of the Appeal Committee shall be made in writing, shall state the reasons on which it is based and shall not be subject to appeal. The decision shall be binding on all parties.

2.9. Budget

- a) All committees contribute to the budget of the following year by submitting a proposed budget for their area of work by the end of August.
- b) The General Secretary presents the proposals to the Supervisory Board who prioritise the different proposals.
- c) A motion to adopt the budget is presented to the Members for an electronic vote before the end of the year.

2.10. Cooperation between committees and main office

- a) Communication and delivery of all documents and invitations both between the Federation and its members and within the organs and committees shall take place, unless otherwise formulated or agreed to, by electronic communication.
- b) All communication shall be deemed to have been delivered to the electronic addresses provided to the Federation for this purpose if the electronic outgoing protocol error free. The obligation to inform the Federation of changes in these addresses is the responsibility of the respective member.
- c) The committees are not subject to any instructions or control either in terms of content or in expertise by other committees or organs, except in the exceptional cases described in these Standing Orders by the Members' Assembly or the Supervisory Board.
- d) The coordinators shall be obliged to implement the decisions of the committees insofar as they can be implemented within the agreed budget. Furthermore, should decisions of the respective committee be incompatible in the opinion of the respective coordinator with fundamental strategic decisions made by the Members' Assembly or the Supervisory Board, the coordinator may refer the implementation to the General Secretary for clarification.

2.11. Committee and Supervisory Board – General part

2.11.1. Committees and Supervisory Board – Basic principles

- a) The provisions formulated under 2.10. apply to all bodies and committees, unless specific provisions have been formulated in these Standing Orders or in the Statutes.
- b) If more far-reaching or contradictory requirements are formulated under Chapter 3. and subsequently with regard to the individual organs and committees, these shall prevail over the information provided here in the general section.

2.11.2. Committee and Supervisory Board – Guests

- a) All organs and bodies are entitled to invite non-voting guest participants to the meetings if the majority of the members present agrees. Confidentiality declarations and conflict of interest declarations in the same form as for regular members apply.

2.11.3. Committees and Supervisory Board – Working method

- a) The General Secretary shall propose a member of the Federation's main office, hereinafter referred to as the Coordinator, to the committees after their election for permanent supervision and support. The committees may reject the proposed employee giving reasons in writing and propose an alternative employee.
- b) The Committees may elect a Chairperson who shall act as the external representative of the Committee and liaise with the Coordinator, the Board and other Committees.
- c) Within the framework of the adopted budget, the Coordinator and the Committees shall have the right to establish working groups or to call in additional external experts.
- d) All institutions and bodies shall have at least one physical meeting every other year. Telephone conferences are held between the physical meetings as required. The same working method applies to both meeting types.

- e) The Coordinator shall be responsible for convening and preparing the agenda of physical meetings and conference calls.
- f) Meetings shall start at the agreed fixed time, telephone conferences shall not last longer than two hours.
- g) The written invitation to meetings together with the agenda shall be sent by e-mail no later than seven days before the meeting - unless an urgent meeting is convened at short notice.
- h) The Coordinator or an alternate member appointed by the Chairperson shall record and document all results, decisions and votes taken, both in physical meetings and in teleconferences. The minutes must be sent to the members at the latest two weeks after the respective meeting.

2.11.4. Committees – Voting rights of the Coordinator

- a) The Coordinator shall not be entitled to vote.
- b) The Coordinator of the ICC has voting rights.

2.11.5. Committees and Supervisory Board – Confidentiality and conflict of interest

- a) All members of the committees and the Supervisory Board sign the declarations of conflict of interest provided by the Federation and are obliged to keep them up to date. The members of committees and bodies shall determine whether a declared conflict of interest leads to an obligation to abstain in individual cases.
- b) All members of the committees and the Supervisory Board sign the declaration of confidentiality provided by the Federation.

2.11.6. Committees and Supervisory Board – Expense allowances

- a) The reimbursement of expenses for participation and assistance in committees and bodies as well as travel expenses for participation in committee meetings is regulated by the general reimbursement schedule of the Biodynamic Federation - Demeter International.

3. Supervisory Board

3.1. Purpose, objectives and areas of activity – Supervisory Board

- a) The Supervisory Board can allocate the supervision of certain working areas to individual Supervisory Board members.
- b) In the event of serious misconduct, such as breaches of confidentiality or impartiality, the Supervisory Board is entitled to suspend or exclude members of other bodies from their activities. This decision must be substantiated in writing.
- c) The Supervisor Board may decide on a procedure not provided for in these Standing Orders and shall inform the Members' Assembly.

3.2. Members – Supervisory Board

- a) Members of the Supervisory Board shall be responsible for the overall organisation. Even if they are nominated by a member, this does not mean that they represent or give preference to that member.

3.3. Chair – Supervisory Board

The President shall chair the meetings of the Supervisory Board and telephone conferences. If the President is unable to attend, the Vice-President shall take the chair. If the deputy chairman is not present either, the remaining members of the Supervisory Board shall elect a chairman for this meeting.

3.4. Working method – Supervisory Board

- a) In addition to the main meeting at the Members' Assembly, the Supervisory Board has at least two additional physical meetings per year. All Board members, the General Secretary and an employee of the Federation to take the minutes take part in regular meetings.
- b) The meeting schedule for the coming year shall be determined and recorded in the minutes of the main meeting during the Members' Assembly.
- c) The convening of the meeting and the agenda shall be drawn up by the General Secretary in consultation with the President and the Vice-President. Adjustments to the agenda shall be approved at the beginning of the meeting and shall be either discussed as additional items after the topics that have been listed on the agenda or postponed to the next meeting.
- d) The minute taker shall record the results of votes taken at meetings or by electronic means. The minutes of the meetings shall be sent to the members of the Supervisory Board as soon as possible, but no later than three weeks after the respective meeting or telephone conference. The approval of the minutes of the previous meeting shall be on the agenda of each meeting of the Supervisory Board.
- e) The complete minutes with all details shall be made available only to the members of the Supervisory Board. A precis of the minutes with the most important points shall be prepared and sent to the members after approval by the General Secretary.

4. Committee for Advisory, Research and Training (ART)

4.1. Purpose, objectives and areas of activity – ART

- a) The ART Committee is in charge of activities in advisory, research and training for the members of the Federation.
- b) The ART Committee has members from and is in close collaboration with the wider team of the Section for Agriculture.
- c) The ART Committee develops strategies for Advisory, Research and Training as advice to the Supervisory Board and for decision by the Members' Assembly.
- d) The ART Committee formulates evaluation criteria for the evaluation of investment in ART projects by member associations.
- e) The committee is an advisory body to the Supervisory Board, the Members' Assembly and other committees of the Federation.

4.2. Members – ART

- a) The members of the ART Committee come from different countries.

- b) The members of the ART Committee have a background in either advisory or training or research or combined expertise. The members are preferably multi-lingual, English is indispensable.
- c) The Section appoints the responsible person from the Section team for each subject area and these persons share one seat in the ART Committee.

4.3. Working method – ART

- a) The ART Committee is chaired by a representative of the Section for Agriculture.
- b) The ART Committee meets either physically or by phone conference as required.
- c) The meetings are prepared by the co-ordinator.
- d) The notice of meeting, agenda and relevant documents are submitted at least a week in advance of the meeting.

5. International Marketing Committee (IMC)

5.1. Purpose, objectives and areas of activity - IMC

- a) The IMC is in charge of marketing issues for the Federation. International marketing questions are addressed and resolved in cooperation with the Federation, national organisations and key players in the market. Effective marketing of Demeter products is essential to support licensees in their biodynamic work and to enable consumers to source Demeter products.
- b) The Committee is an advisory body to the Supervisory Board, the Members' Assembly and other committees of the Federation.
- c) To develop a vision for the promotion of the Demeter trademarks together with the national organisations.
- d) To formulate the key values of Demeter quality according to the principles of the Federation for professional communication.
- e) To comment on motions and proposals for standards from a marketing perspective.
- f) To maintain contacts with the actors in the international Demeter market in order to support Demeter marketing and enable connections between market players.
- g) To organise meetings and or expositions with and for Demeter actors.
- h) To give feedback on the appearance and image of Demeter trademarks from a marketing perspective.

5.2. Members - IMC

- a) The IMC members come from different countries.
- b) The members of the IMC have a background in the Demeter market and/or in biodynamic agriculture. The members are preferably multi-lingual, English is indispensable.

5.3. Working method - IMC

- a) The IMC meets either physically or by phone conference as required.
- b) The meetings are prepared by the Coordinator.
- c) The notice of meeting, agenda and relevant documents are submitted at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.

6. Committee for Lobby and Public Relations (LPR)

6.1. Purpose, objectives and areas of activity – LPR

- a) The Committee for Lobby and Public Relations defines specific policy needs and objectives for biodynamic food and farming worldwide.
- b) The LPR Committee identifies international policy frameworks where the Federation wants to be involved as stakeholder.
- c) The LPR Committee coordinates contacts with partners (NGOs, IFOAM, ...).
- d) The LPR Committee prepares position papers and guidelines for policy work of the Federation.
- e) The LPR Committee is guiding, advising and supervising operational policy work in the Brussels office.

6.2. Members – LPR

The members of the committee come from different countries.

6.3. Working method – LPR

- a) Proposals for political positions and activities have to be presented to the Coordinator.
- b) The committee works on the base of electronic consultations.
- c) Telephone conferences are organized four times a year and in urgent consultations.
- d) A physical meeting is held in connection to the Members' Assembly.

7. Standards Committee (SC)

7.1. Basic Principles - SC

- a) Transparency, comparability, objective discussion and equal treatment form the basis for the work of the Standards Committee. In addition, the SC acts according to the principles derived from the vision and mission statement of the Federation.

7.2. Purpose and objectives - SC

- a) Only the extended SC has the right to submit amendments to the standard to the Members' Assembly for voting.
- b) Motions to change the Standard from delegates of the Federation must be submitted to the extended SC. The SC has the right to reject motions with written reasons or to submit amended motions to the Members' Assembly for a vote.
- c) The permanent SC is the highest authority for the interpretation of the International Demeter Biodynamic Standard. The standards' interpretation decisions of the SC shall be binding on certifying members and ICO.

d) The permanent SC decides on the development of new product standards and certification categories and submits them to the Members' Assembly for incorporation into the standard for voting.

e) The permanent SC shall comment on new national categories of the standard. Draft regulations governing new product categories in national standards must be submitted to the permanent SC for approval prior to national approval. The SC documents all new national standards and informs the Supervisory Board. Further details are set out in chapter 7.8. "New Standard Categories".

f) The permanent SC shall be responsible for receiving applications for a country exemption from certifying organisations and decide on them in accordance with the procedures described. Further details are set out in chapter 7.9. "Country exemptions".

7.3. Members – SC

a) Members of the SC shall be elected every three years in accordance with the minimum and maximum number of seats laid down in the Statutes and according to the election procedures described in chapter 2.2.

7.4. Nomination procedure - SC

a) The right to nominate candidates for the seats of the permanent SC shall be vested solely in certifying members of the Federation.

b) The right to nominate candidates for the seats of the enlarged SC shall be vested in all members of the Federation.

c) The members of the SC should be nominated on the grounds of their knowledge and experience in the areas of inspection, soil fertility, crop production, use of preparations, animal husbandry, vegetable growing, quality management, food law and processing technology, and should cover them in their generality as a group. A good knowledge of the English language and sufficient time capacity are prerequisites.

7.5. Working method –SC

a) Motions for amendments to the Standard, applications for country exemptions or requests for interpretation of the current International Demeter Biodynamic Standard must be submitted to the Coordinator.

b) The permanent and the extended SC shall generally operate using electronic consultation. The Coordinator shall be entitled to call a telephone conference if the electronic consultation does not lead to clear decisions or for certain tasks such as the preparation of final motions for the Members' Assembly.

7.6. Quorum and decision making - SC

a) Each SC member shall have the right to vote on any subject, irrespective of their general area of expertise. Members of the SC who are partly or fully employed by a national organisation must abstain from voting on applications from their national organisation.

b) All decision making in the permanent and extended SC shall be taken by a simple majority of the votes cast. Abstentions or failure to reply by electronic vote within seven days shall be treated as votes not cast. There will be no reminder by the Coordinator.

- c) The Coordinator shall set a timeframe for a final decision (on exemptions and interpretations) by the standing SC, which shall normally be seven days after the receipt of the complete application (with all relevant supporting information) by the SC members.
- d) The Coordinator shall communicate the final decision of the SC to the applicant no later than three weeks after receipt of the complete application. In the case of a rejected application, a detailed justification shall be provided.
- e) All decisions of the permanent SC shall be communicated at least once a month to the members of the extended SC in the form of a monthly report. The members of the extended SC have the right to comment on them. The members of the extended SC have the right to challenge all decisions of the permanent SC concerning country exemptions and standard interpretations in a debate at the annual physical meeting.

7.7. Amendments to the Standard - SC

- a) All members, the Supervisory Board and all committees of the Federation may submit motions to amend the International Demeter Biodynamic Standard to the Coordinator. They may also instruct the Coordinator to prepare a motion on a specific topic within the framework of the annual working group at the Members' Assembly.
- b) All applications must be written in English and submitted in the format provided by the Coordinator.
- c) After being processed by the extended SC, the Coordinator shall submit all amendments as a single motion for the vote of the Members' Assembly. The final version will be sent to all members and delegates at least eight weeks before the Members' Assembly.
- d) All delegates have the right to object to the entire motion or individual amendments. If more than one-fourth of the delegates object to the entire motion or individual amendments, the entire motion must be withdrawn, or the relevant amendment removed from the motion and revised at the annual workshop during the Members' Assembly. The SC may submit the overall motion or the objected changes for a vote in an electronic vote or at the next Members' Assembly.
- e) Further details on amendments to the standard are regulated under chapter 2.1. and 2.4.

7.8. New standard categories - SC

- a) New standard categories can only be submitted by certifying members.
- b) The respective member prepares a draft standard for the certification of products of the new product category. Its structure must be similar to that of the existing Standard and, wherever appropriate, refer to the existing provisions of the Standard in the general part.
- c) The permanent SC shall verify that the content meets the basic criteria:
- It complies with the principles of the International Demeter Biodynamic Standard;
 - The standard requirements are controllable and certifiable;
 - The structure and format meet the requirements.

Once the SC has approved the Standard, an assessment of the Supervisory Board in terms of Brand image is required. Subject to the approval of the Supervisory Board, a copy of the final standard will be sent to all member countries and the Supervisory Board.

d) As soon as a second certifying member notifies the need for a country standard of the same or similar product category, the Federation is obliged to prepare an International Demeter Biodynamic Standard for this category. The standing SC shall draw up a final draft in consultation with the two members concerned. The new International product category standard must be submitted to the Members' Assembly as part of the vote on amendments to the Standard.

7.9. Country Exemptions - SC

a) The normal duration of a country exemption shall be three years. The standing SC may decide to shorten these terms and/or to formulate further conditions for granting.

b) The decisions of the standing SC on country exemptions must be ratified by the Members' Assembly. After the three-year term an extension by the Members' Assembly for another three years is necessary.

c) From the second renewal onwards, each new application shall initiate a discussion and full review of the exemption by the Members' Assembly. The necessity must be demonstrated by the applicant. The review may include the requirement to incorporate the derogation as a rule in the International Demeter Biodynamic Standard.

8. Accreditation Council (AC)

8.1. Purpose and objectives – AC

a) The AC is responsible for the implementation of an internal assessment and accreditation program for the harmonisation of certification programs in certifying member organizations of the Federation.

b) The AC does not necessarily accredit using common standardised accreditation schemes but using an internally developed quality assurance system. With regard to this quality assurance system, the AC is guided by ISO 17065 for the assessment of national certifiers and by ISO 17011 for its own work. Nevertheless, it always acts in accordance with the general principles of these systems - equal treatment, transparency, independence and comparability of decisions. Elements of the internal accreditation are:

- Elaboration, further development and maintenance of a quality assurance manual (formerly "Directions for the implementation of a certification program within the organisations of Demeter-International") which defines minimum criteria for a certification program recognised by the Federation.
- Elaboration and updating of a continuous evaluation (formerly "yearly update") of the documents and procedures in use by the certifying members of the Federation.
- Implementation of an ongoing audit system of the certifying members to evaluate the implementation and enforcement of the International Demeter Biodynamic Standard, the information provided in the annual document evaluation and compliance with the quality assurance manual. Audits are carried out by members of the AC, employees of other certifying organisations or by third parties commissioned by the AC. The appointment of auditor(s) is the responsibility of the AC.

- Drawing up recommendations and corrective actions to improve the respective certification schemes based on the shortcomings evaluated in the actions described above.
- Acknowledgement, suspension or withdrawal of Demeter certification programs carried out by members. This right also applies to third party organisations appointed by members and ICO.

8.2. Members – AC

The members of the AC must have experience in inspection and/or certification of biodynamic and Demeter businesses. The members are preferably multilingual, very good English knowledge and sufficient time capacity are prerequisites.

8.3. Nomination procedure – AC

The right to nominate candidates for AC seats shall be vested solely in certifying members of the Federation and the Supervisory and Executive Boards.

8.4. Working method –AC

a) The Coordinator or a member appointed by the Chairperson shall record and document all results, decisions and votes taken, both in physical meetings and in conference calls. Minutes of resolutions are kept continuously; results of a meeting are to be entered at the latest after one week and the members are to be informed about the update.

b) The Coordinator shall be responsible for convening and preparing the agenda of physical meetings and conference calls. Invitations contain an agenda and all necessary documents and are sent at least one week before regular meetings.

8.5. Quorum and decision making - AC

a) A meeting has a quorum if at least three members are present.

b) Decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of the votes cast. Abstentions will be counted as votes not cast.

8.6. Sanctioning - AC

a) The AC is entitled to require certifying members to take corrective action to cure non-conformities with the Quality Assurance Manual within a specified period of time.

b) The AC is entitled to impose financial and structural sanctions if measures formulated under a) are not closed out within the agreed time frame. The published sanctions catalogue of the AC shall apply. The AC is entitled to impose sanctions not explicitly mentioned in the sanctions catalogue in individual cases within the framework of the proportionality of comparable infringements.

c) The AC is entitled to temporarily suspend certifying members in repeated or serious cases of non-compliance with the Quality Assurance Manual or if measures formulated under b) do not have any effect. Suspension of a certifying member is equivalent to passive membership and can mean the temporary full or partial takeover of the certification by another authorized organization or continuation of certification under the permanent supervision of a representative nominated by the AC.

- d) The AC is entitled to request the expulsion of a certifying member by the Members' Assembly.
- e) Further details on sanctions and the procedures to be followed are formulated in the sanctions catalogue of the AC and in the Quality Assurance Manual.

9. International Certification Committee – (ICC)

9.1. Purpose and objective - ICC

- a) The main task of the International certification Committee is the supervision of and advisory support for the international certification program carried out by the International Certification Office (ICO). In addition, the ICC can make sanctioning and certification decisions that deviate from the ICO's described standard procedures and require a second evaluation.

9.2. Members - ICC

- a) The composition of the committee consists of independent experts with experience in agricultural practice, nutrition, food processing, inspection or certification of Demeter farms and companies.
- b) The members are obliged to act to the best of their knowledge and belief, i.e. they are appointed as individual, independent persons responsible for their own actions and not as delegates or representatives of their country. Representation by other persons is not possible.
- c) The head of the ICO certification program is the only non-elected member, attends all meetings and is entitled to vote. He/She is also the Chairperson and the external representative of the committee.

9.3. Working method – ICC

- a) Meetings of the ICC shall be convened and prepared by the Chairperson.
- b) Invitations to meetings shall be made in writing at least two weeks before the actual date of the meeting.
- c) The relevant documents and the agenda shall be sent to the members of the ICC as soon as possible, but not later than one week before the meeting.
- d) Members shall be required to attend meetings. The Chairperson shall be informed immediately of any incapacity and the reason.
- e) ICC meetings shall be convened as necessary. Telephone conferences must be held at least every two months and a physical meeting at least once a year.
- f) The minute keeper shall be appointed by the Chairperson at the beginning of a meeting of the ICC.
- g) Decisions shall be recorded during the meeting as part of a full record of the meeting.
- h) The minutes shall be made available to the members of the ICC as soon as possible and no later than four weeks after the meeting. They are only valid after confirmation by the ICC.

- i) The minutes shall be confidential and accessible only to members of the ICC and to staff of the ICO.
- j) The Supervisory Board and the General Secretary may inspect the minutes of the ICC meetings in justified exceptional cases. This requires the explicit consent of the members of the ICC.

9.4. Decision making – ICC

- a) The ICC makes decisions by a simple majority of the votes cast. Abstentions will be counted as votes not cast.
- b) In the case of an economic or personal relationship between an ICC member and an applicant or a licensee involved in the certification process, the member shall inform the ICC in writing. He must leave the room during the decision-making process and abstain from voting. This shall be recorded in the minutes.
- c) When a member of the ICC has been or is acting as an inspector or adviser to the applicant, he shall leave the room for decision making and abstain from voting. This shall be recorded in the minutes.

9.5. Sanctioning - ICC

- a) The Sanctions' Register of the Federation in the currently valid version shall apply.

10. Trademark Committee (TMC)

10.1. Purpose, objectives and areas of activity – TMC

- a) The Trademark Committee develops a strategy for the protection, registration and prolongation of the trademarks of the Federation.

10.2. Members – TMC

- a) Members of the Trademark Committee have basic knowledge on and experience with trademark rights.

10.3. Working method – TMC

- a) The Trademark Committee has at least one physical meeting every other year.
- b) The minutes of the meetings are recorded by the Coordinator.

11. Membership Committee (MC)

11.1. Purpose, objectives and areas of activity

- a) The Membership Committee evaluates and advises new members to the Members' Assembly.
- b) The Membership Committee accompanies the members and evaluates the compliance with the membership criteria.
- c) The Membership Committee supports the national groups in their decision process.

11.2. Members

a) The committee is composed by members that have experience in developing biodynamic organisations. There should be representation of different continents and backgrounds.

11.3. Working method

a) The committee works as described in §2.5.

b) In the context of the evaluation, existing biodynamic and Demeter organizations are interviewed.

c) The following criteria are evaluated in particular:

- Legal structure (registration, organogram, statutes, meetings, members)
- Financial report (final accounts, number of licensees in the country)
- Report of activities (meetings, support of members)
- Attendance at the Members' Assemblies

d) Not only documents are evaluated but as well interviews are conducted.

12. Procedural Documents

a) All committees described in the Statutes and these Standing Orders are entitled to develop procedural descriptions that go beyond these Standing Orders or to further develop already existing procedural documents that are mentioned in these Standing Orders, such as quality management handbooks or sanction catalogues.

b) This right shall also apply to committees which did not exist at the time these Standing Orders were drawn up and which are appointed by the Members' Assembly under § 5 (4).

c) Procedural documents shall be integrated into the quality management manual of the Federation and shall only exist independently in justified exceptional cases.

d) Procedural documents shall be binding on the addressees, members, bodies or licensees named in the scope.

e) Procedural documents may specify, or supplement requirements laid down in the statutes or standing orders but may not limit, contradict or invalidate them.

f) Changes to the procedural documents may only be made by the body responsible for the description in question, in accordance with the decision-making procedures set out in these Standing Orders.

g) Changes to the procedural documents require an implementation date in order to be valid. In any case, the date of implementation must be chosen in such a way that the right of the Members' Assembly to debate and the right of appeal can be exercised before it enters into force. Addressees affected by changes must be informed of the upcoming changes sufficiently in advance so that their own implementation procedures can be respected.