



## **IOAS CORE VALUES**

as defined by the IOAS Board with input from all personnel  
October 2012

### **Value 1: Improving the life of our planet and its people**

We believe that we provide an ethical and influential contribution to the well-being of people and our planet through:

1. Promotion, advancement and protection of organic and sustainable agriculture;
2. Contributing to the integrity of the various claims we work with to avoid degradation of standards;
3. Protecting and improving authentic claims which are meaningful and have measurable benefit;
4. Supporting organic and sustainable agriculture's contribution to the bigger picture of a better planet;
5. Supporting the environment and social justice through credible claims;
6. Interpreting sustainability as socially just, ecologically sound and economically viable in perpetuity.

In practice this means that we,

1. Carefully choose to work with those claims which are authentic and meaningful and meet the criteria expressed above;
2. Help train our community in best practice;
3. Disseminate timely and accurate information to improve quality and awareness;
4. Communicate effectively across the organisation and the communities we serve;
5. Seek to provide a one stop accreditation for all credible claims that meet our mission.

### **Value 2: Quality**

We believe that quality is achieved when:

1. We have expertise in the standards areas with which we work and the sector in which they are applied;
2. We have expertise in certification, accreditation and audit techniques;
3. We ensure that we are continuously updated on new developments;
4. We are always professional in our approach;
5. We aim for continuous improvement and strive for excellence;
6. Our work is seen to be credible, reliable, rigorous and consistent;

7. Our clients express satisfaction with our work;
8. We are seen to be a key source of knowledge in the sectors in which we work.

In practice this means that we:

1. Ensure staff, accreditation committee and Board members are knowledgeable in their field;
2. Provide active training to develop personnel skills;
3. Perform our work with rigour in line with recognised procedures;
4. Commit to continuous quality improvement and innovation through internal and external evaluation;
5. Are responsive to complaints and appeals and see them as opportunities for improvement;
6. Strive to achieve quality whilst being affordable and accessible.

### **Value 3: Integrity**

We believe that integrity is demonstrated when:

1. We are independent of any single dominant interest from a company or government institution or association;
2. We are impartial and we behave in a non-discriminatory way with our clients;
3. We are objective since we are predictable and apply our policies and procedures in a consistent manner;
4. We are transparent, since our policies and procedures are documented and open;
5. We consider values above income;
6. We are perceived as such.

In practice this means:

1. Our income comes exclusively from our published activities;
2. We grant that personnel are free from conflict of interests and personal bias;
3. We treat our clients fairly and consistently;
4. To ensure all our clients understand the accreditation system we send them our Operating Manuals and our system is periodically audited by external bodies;
5. Our decision-making considers mission above income;
6. Feedback from clients and collaborators confirms their trust in our integrity.

### **Value 4: Innovation**

We believe that innovation takes place when:

1. We keep the bigger picture in mind;
2. It is recognised as a core component of our day to day business;
3. We look for new approaches as a means to secure integrity;
4. We are open to learn from others;
5. We are willing to discard old habits;

6. We are willing to take risks;
7. When the whole organisation is part of it.

In practice this means:

1. We utilise the annual meeting to discuss new ideas;
2. We utilise the management review to monitor innovation;
3. We invite external experts to inspire and facilitate our own innovation;
4. We participate in other fora where innovation in our field of work is discussed;
5. We institute an annual award for the best innovative idea;
6. That job descriptions include wording that encourages staff to contribute to the development to the IOAS.

### **Value 5: Respect for People**

We believe that we encourage respect through:

1. Treating each other with honesty;
2. Encouraging commitment and longevity of service;
3. Working with passion, humour and good spirits;
4. Providing personal development opportunities for staff, board and AC;
5. Appreciating our diversity in culture and geography;
6. Striving for balance in work and play.

We believe that we should treat our clients and stakeholders with the same consideration with which we treat each other

1. By recognising and appreciating differences in culture and striving to accommodate differences with justification and fairness;
2. By applying the accreditation requirements firmly, fairly and understandably;
3. By keeping clients well informed beyond the requirements of accreditation.

In practice this means:

1. We carefully select personnel with commitment and shared values;
2. Taking a flexible approach to balance private needs of staff with work;
3. Ensuring adequate resources to take on-going training seriously;
4. Conducting our meetings in an informal and friendly manner;
5. Publishing information and newsletters;
6. Providing input from our experience of certification realities to standard setting authorities;
7. In conducting our work, we consider the diversity of cultures and ecological practices.