

IOAS Inc.



IOAS Operating Manual

**Information and requirements specific to
assessment and accreditation
against the NATRUE Scheme**

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IOAS Operating Manual

Information and requirements specific to NATRUE Accreditation

1. Introduction

This operating manual contains specific information and requirements of the NATRUE Accreditation scheme implemented by IOAS on behalf of the scheme owner, NATRUE AISBL, the International Natural and Organic Cosmetics Association. It should always be read in conjunction with the IOAS General Operating Manual which contains a full description of IOAS and its overall approach to its work conducting accreditation and surveillance of certification bodies working in the field of organic and sustainable agriculture and related fields which is performed in line with ISO/IEC 17011:2017.

It is IOAS' approach to harmonise the assessment process for the increasing range of schemes offered so as to reduce the burden of accreditation to all certification bodies. We are also continually working to gain recognition or equivalence of our work with scheme owners and government authorities such that we can offer 'one assessment, many accreditations'.

2. Scheme owner

2.1 NATRUE AISBL (an international non-profit association) based in Brussels is The International Natural and Organic Cosmetics Association, whose objective is to ensure the availability of quality natural and organic cosmetic products for consumers worldwide. NATRUE has identified two main areas of activity to reach this objective:

- To ensure the availability of premium raw materials through appropriate ingredient regulation
- In the absence of a regulatory definition for natural and organic cosmetics to provide strict international criteria (the NATRUE Label)

2.2 NATRUE is a membership based organisation, open to any with interest in this field according to NATRUE Statutes.

2.3 Initially NATRUE labelled products were certified by certification bodies approved by NATRUE. From October 2013, NATRUE have launched a formal and independent accreditation scheme to provide greater assurance to the NATRUE label.

3. NATRUE Accreditation

3.1 The NATRUE Accreditation scheme is an accreditation scheme which was first implemented by IOAS since 2013 under agreement with NATRUE.

3.2 The NATRUE Accreditation scheme is open to any certification body which meets the requirements of the scheme and which has first applied to the scheme owner. Accredited certifiers sign a contract with NATRUE (Commitment Declaration) and agree with all the specified provisions. Forms for application and the 'Commitment Declaration' can be downloaded for free from the NATRUE web site at www.natrue.org

3.3 NATRUE accreditation shall be for one or more of the following scopes:

- Certification of finished cosmetic products (Natural Cosmetics, Organic Cosmetics)
- Certification of raw materials
- Approval of formula
- Approval of raw materials

4. Requirements for accreditation

4.1 The general application, assessment and surveillance procedures detailed in Section 7 of the IOAS General Operating Manual apply.

4.2 Applicant certification bodies (CBs) must first apply to the scheme owner by completing the NATRUE application form.

4.3 Once the application is accepted by NATRUE the CB may apply to IOAS.

4.3.1 IOAS will provide an application form to be completed by the applicant CB. IOAS application procedure follows that described in IOAS General Operating Manual at Section 7.

4.3.2 The applicant is made fully aware of its rights and obligations before application through the provision of this Operating Manual, IOAS General Operating Manual and having access to sample copies of the Contract for provision of IOAS assessment and surveillance ([PLO502](#)) and the fee schedule ([LS0503](#)).

4.3.3 The applicant CB must provide evidence that NATRUE has approved the application as per 4.2.

4.3.4 If the application form review is satisfactory, the applicant is offered to sign the referred contract ([PLO502](#)) and IOAS proceeds with the certification body document review.

4.3.5 After the document review is completed and satisfactory, IOAS carries out an on-site visit (office and operator sites) as described in 4.6.

4.3.6 If the visit result is positive, IOAS will address the case to its Accreditation Committee for an accreditation decision.

4.3.7 If the accreditation decision is positive, the CB will be issued a certificate as per 5.2.

4.4 The requirements against which a certification body is assessed are the '[NATRUE Requirements for Certification Bodies](#)' which can be downloaded from the NATRUE web site.

4.5 The certifier is obliged to apply the '**NATRUE Label: requirements to be met by natural and organic cosmetics**' which are also available on the NATRUE website.

4.6 The NATRUE Requirements for Certification Bodies specifies that IOAS must conduct assessment and surveillance of certification bodies according to ISO/IEC 17011:2017 including:

- Review of the applicant Certification Body procedure and documentation;
- Audit to the headquarters or main office of the Applicant Certification Body;
- Witness audit of a representative manufacturing plant;
- Ongoing monitoring of the Accredited Certification Body, including at least one up-to-date accreditation visits every second year to an office conducting NATRUE Label Certification and at least one witness audit or review audit every second year (note that the IOAS requirement takes precedence per Section 4.1 above);
- During the first assessment and re-assessment to verify files and formulas of certified licensees depending on the number of operators evaluated by the CB, as per NATRUE Requirements for Certification bodies.

4.7 In cases where the CB has no or few operators the witness audit at the initial on-site visit may be a mock inspection.

4.8 IOAS reserves the right to require assistance from a technical expert as it deems necessary and depending on the standard scope. Technical support may also be sought from the scheme owner. The cost of such experts at on-site visits is borne by the certification body. Such a need and a cost estimation will be communicated before the application proceeds.

4.9 IOAS reserves the right to require assistance from translators/interpreters as it deems necessary and depending on the country/ies the CB operates in. The cost of translation/interpretation is borne by the certification body. Such a need will be communicated before proceeding with the visit.

4.10 Under IOAS procedures, assessment of the CB can be combined with assessment against other schemes.

4.11 Applicant CBs that are already IOAS clients may apply at any time in their accreditation cycle (but first applying to NATRUE) and IOAS will endeavour to conduct the assessment linked to on-going surveillance procedures. However, if the timing of the application does not fit with existing schedules, additional visits may be required, and corresponding fees will be charged. The duration of the initial accreditation contract in such circumstances will be synchronised with all other schemes which means that the initial NATRUE accreditation cycle may be shorter than five years.

4.12 IOAS is responsible for granting accreditation in line with its normal procedures. The accreditation decision is notified to NATRUE which will in turn conclude a 'certifier's contract' with the CB. NATRUE reserves the right to withdraw or terminate the contract and to call on IOAS to investigate problems. For further details, see the certifier's contract.

4.13 Grace period

NATRUE may allow for a grace period, during which can grant a limited license for the duration of the grace period. Duration of the grace period ends when the applicant has achieved the requisite full accreditation to the NATRUE standard within 18-months of initial application with the AB. NATRUE considers granting a grace period if this is recommended by the AB carrying out the assessment for that CB's application.

4.14 Geographical Scope: NATRUE accreditation may be granted globally, for a specific list of countries, or for another defined geographic region.

IOAS assesses the CB's demonstrated competence to certify and conduct audits in the countries / regions applied for, considering:

- At minimum one auditor and one reviewer / decision maker, both qualified for the specific scope, demonstrate sufficient knowledge of relevant local laws, as well as scope specific processes, issues, and risks.
- CB has in place effective measures to ensure local operators understand applicable scheme requirements.
- CB has in place effective measures to ensure accuracy, impartiality, and confidentiality in all communications with local operators and personnel, including requirements related to the use of interpreters/translators.

In principle, each country to be added to the accreditation scope is assessed individually by IOAS.

However, a CB may also apply for 'global' scope, in which case IOAS applies the following additional criteria for assessment:

- CB has received no sanction or CNC (critical nonconformity) within the past 12 months.
- NATRUE must clearly allow global geographical scope.
- CB must demonstrate having in place a robust and reliable system to ensure auditing and certification quality meets competence and scheme requirements in all cases, regardless of audit location.

After approval of global geographical scope, IOAS must be able to verify that the system is continuously effective. Any finding indicating malfunction, even if country-specific, may lead to scope reduction returning the CB to approval on individual country basis.

4.15 Adding scope countries to NATRUE accreditation: CBs that are already NATRUE accredited by IOAS for a given scope may apply for additional countries (or global scope) for that given scope, at any time in their accreditation cycle and IOAS will conduct the assessment as document review. In case of approval, verification is conducted as part of on-going surveillance procedures. See section 4.14.

4.16 Regardless of geographical scope amplitude, the contractual requirement for informing the accreditation body of relevant changes to the system (accreditation contract [PL0502](#), Clause C.12) always applies. Relevant changes such as new branch offices / local representations or new inspection bodies shall be informed in a timely manner to IOAS.

5. Reference to NATRUE accreditation and the scheme owner

5.1 The accredited certification body may make reference to being accredited by IOAS in accordance with the requirements described and referred to in the General Operating Manual.

5.2 On being accredited and after payment of all due fees, the certification body will receive an accreditation certificate which states that the organisation has been found to be 'in compliance with the **NATRUE Requirements for Certification Bodies**'. IOAS will also publish the name of the CB on a public list indicating full details of the accreditation and countries of activity. It is this list which takes precedence over any other source.

5.3 The NATRUE web site also maintains information on accredited CBs.

5.4 No reference to approval by NATRUE or use of the NATRUE logo may be made until a 'certifier's contract' is concluded with NATRUE.

5.5 The accredited certification body may make suitable claims on promotional material (brochures, web sites etc.) that the specified scheme operates in compliance with the **NATRUE Requirements for Certification Bodies**.

6. Fees

6.1 The IOAS fee schedule is available at <http://www.ioas.org/assessment/application/>. The IOAS is able to provide a quotation of fees for the requested services but due to the many variables involved, these can only be used for orientation.

6.2 Under the certifier's contract signed with NATRUE the CB is required to pay to NATRUE an annual fee and variable fees.

End

For any specific questions on the NATRUE scheme, please contact your assigned Client Service Manager.

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