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Organic Certification of Seaweed

Presentation

ALGET 2 Webinar - Thursday 19 November 2020

Overview of the presentation

- ❑ Introduction to Vottunarstofan Tún
- ❑ Background to organic certification of seaweed
- ❑ Key aspects of the organic standard
- ❑ Main challenges and risks involved
- ❑ How to prepare for certification

Introduction to Vottunarstofan Tún

- ❑ Vottunarstofan Tún - grassroots organisation
- ❑ Campaigner for sustainability and high environmental criteria
- ❑ Professional approach to auditing - ISO 19011
- ❑ International accreditation - ISO 17065
- ❑ Main schemes served

Schemes served by Vottunarstofan Tún

- ❑ Organic production
- ❑ Natural inputs
- ❑ MSC sustainable fisheries
- ❑ MSC & ASC chain of custody
- ❑ Icelandic Vakinn - tourism
- ❑ FEE - Green Key
- ❑ FEE - Blue Flag



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Background to Organic Certification of Seaweed

- ❑ Any type of „farming“ eligible for organic management
- ❑ Including fishfarming and other aquaculture (seaweed cultivation)
- ❑ Wild collection also eligible provided conditions for management are met
- ❑ Seaweed managed and certified organic for some decades
- ❑ Standard setting and regulation

Key aspects of the organic standard

- ❑ Clear definition and management of the unit
- ❑ Reliable evidence of biomass by species
- ❑ Environmental management plan and environmental impact assessment (proportionate to size)
- ❑ High ecological qualities of collection areas
- ❑ Collection within sustainable levels; must not significantly affect stability of the natural ecosystem; allow for re-generation
- ❑ Segregation at all stages and steps from non-organic activities

Main challenges & risks involved

- ❑ Establishing current status
 - ❑ Requires systematic and robust data aggregation and analysis
 - ❑ This is particularly the case with data on biomass & environmental assessment, thus recognizing potential risks to biodiversity
 - ❑ Current use of the resource - one, few or many? Implications of communal use
 - ❑ Public law and regulation on conservation of areas and/or quotas established for species collected

Main challenges & risks involved

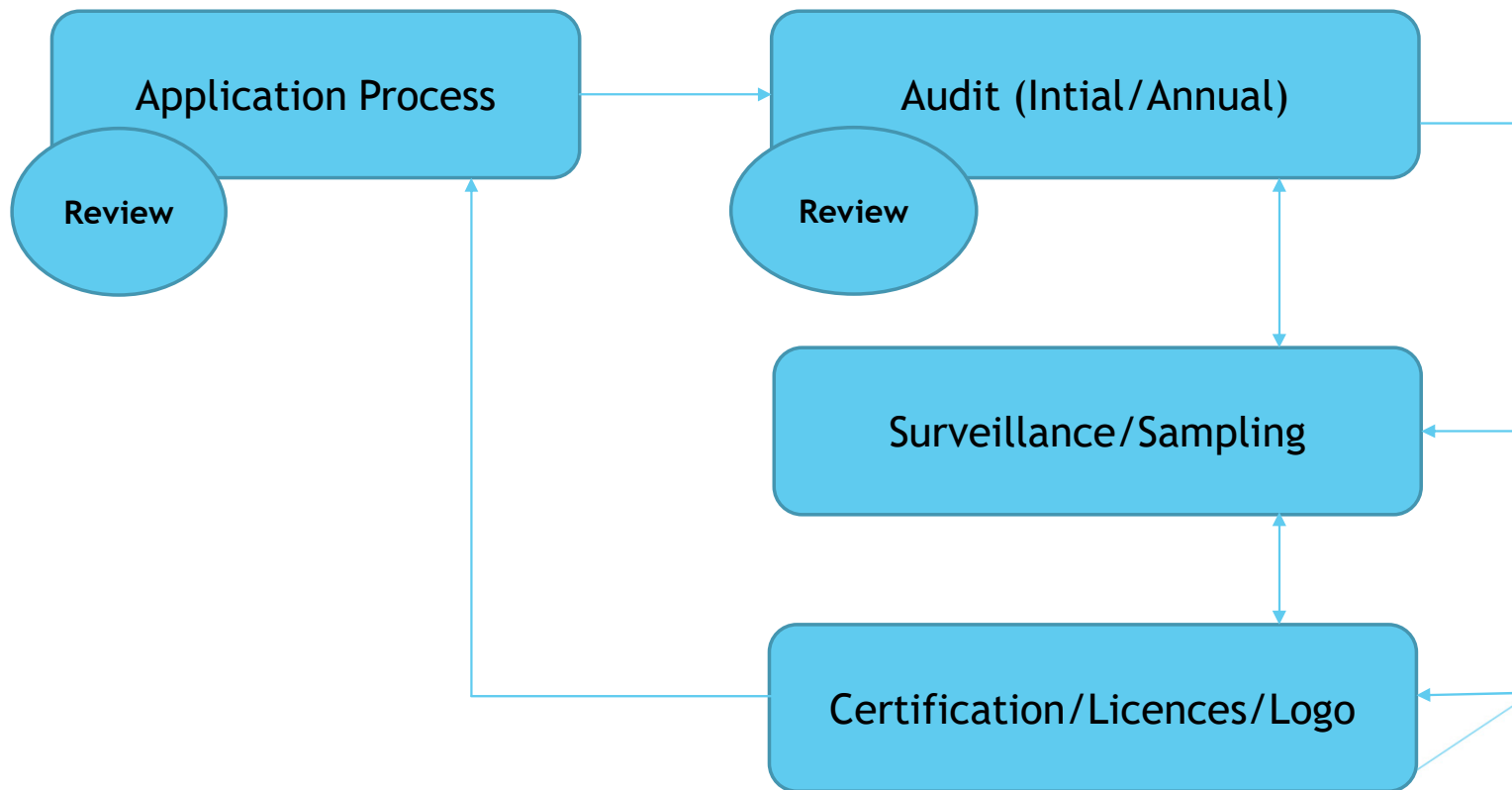
❑ Risks to product integrity:

- ❑ Naturally occurring substances in excess proportions, depending on the target markets (food, feed, other), requiring (expensive) analysis
- ❑ Risk from lack of sea-water quality, this may vary substantially depending on location, currents and other factors; monitoring required by official regulations
- ❑ Potential sources of contamination, incl. sea currents, discharges from land- or sea-based activities, such as domestic, industrial and aquaculture sewage and agricultural substances
- ❑ Operator´s machinery and equipments, including harvesters, containers and vessels
- ❑ Potential loss of quality due to insufficient control of segregation, transporting time, storing, temperature and means of handling raw product prior to processing/drying

How to prepare for certification of seaweed

- ❑ Thorough reading of standards and guidebooks, incl public regulations
- ❑ Acquaintance with industry/science literature
- ❑ Setting up management system appropriate to size and scale
- ❑ Setting up appropriate logging and record-keeping of harvesting for any future verification of compliance
- ❑ Map out all risk points, details of the risks and precautionary measures to avert risks from materializing
- ❑ Ensure all key members of staff are trained to apply the organic method at all levels
- ❑ If sub-contractors are involved, these must be subject to a binding contract and regular inspections

Certification is an on-going process of verification



Organic Certification - Use of references

- ▶ The term organic legally protected in the marketing of agricultural products
- ▶ Licence required for use of logo/reference
- ▶ Rules on style, text and appearance



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