

1. Exchange of information

The first step towards certification is the exchange of information. Naturland provides detailed information about technical and formal aspects of certification.

The interested farm/organisation is then requested to present itself:

Naturland will forward a **basic questionnaire**. The questionnaire assists in obtaining basic data about the operation, as well as the preconditions and prospects for conversion towards organic aquaculture.

2. Pre-evaluation visit

The pre-evaluation visit will be conducted by Naturland according to a detailed agenda. The purpose of the visit is to get an impression of the situation on site and to discuss the steps towards conversion with all parties involved, setting up the **conversion plan**.

Moreover, the pre-evaluation visit is supposed to assist the farm/organisation in preparing for the oncoming inspection.

3. Inspection

In case an agreement is reached, Naturland will order an inspection of the farm/ organisation by an independent inspection body. Before the inspection is scheduled, a **cost estimation** will be issued by the inspection body.

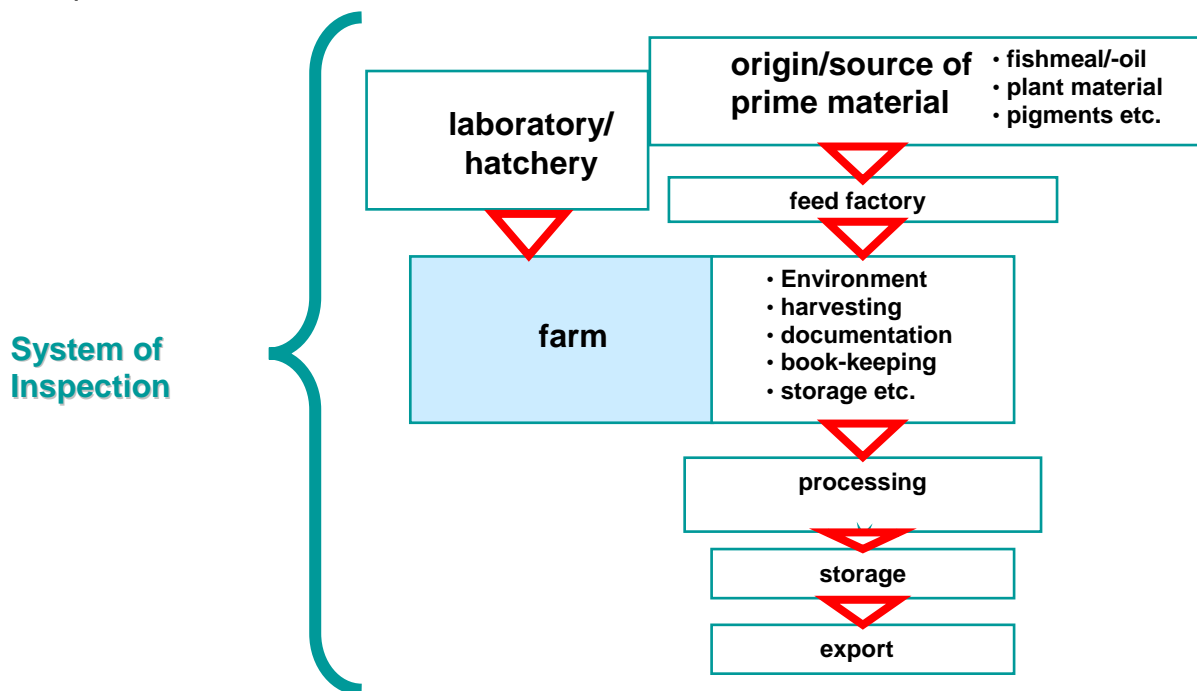
In the field of organic aquaculture, Naturland is cooperating with a number of inspection bodies, according to the type and location of the respective project. This safeguards a good flexibility and international presence of the Naturland certification program.

Naturland entrusts the chosen inspection body with the first inspection as well as the annual follow-up inspections. These institutes have gathered extensive experience over the years and are familiar with people of different cultures and their way of living. Ample knowledge about quality management as well as different agricultural and aquacultural products guarantee and underline their qualification.



A thorough inventory of the operation will be carried out, covering all aspects of farm management, input materials, documentation, harvest, processing, and export. According to size and complexity of operation, inspection will take one to several days.

Following the inspection, the inspector will issue the **inspection report** to Naturland, listing and evaluating the findings. Herein, recommendations regarding certification and/or conditions are submitted to the Naturland certification committee. The farm/company is given the chance to comment on the report.



4. Certification

The inspection report, together with further data and information, is forwarded to the Naturland Certification Committee. This committee is independent from Naturland association, but Naturland provides advice. The decision of the committee is binding for Naturland's management.

The certification committee decides on the admission and certification of new farms as Naturland members. It also decides on the annual renewal of certification.

The committee's decision is communicated to the farm/company by the **certification letter**, containing also the conditions the certification is subjected to.

5. Contracts

Assuming a positive decision by the certification committee, a contractual partnership between a farm/organisation and the Naturland Association can be established. At this point, a **producer contract** between the



farm/organisation and Naturland will be concluded. Herein, the farm/company commits itself to comply with the Naturland standards and is entitled to declare itself a Naturland partner.

The legal basis for the use of the Naturland trade mark for labeling products is governed by a separate contract, the so called **sublicense contract** with the Naturland Zeichen GmbH (Naturland trade mark company).

6. Certificates

After all formalities have been successfully concluded, the Naturland Certification Committee will issue the **general certificate (farm certificate)**, stating the farm's/company's compliance with Naturland standards.

For individual shipments/sales, **organic transaction certificates (OTCs)** are issued, accompanying the delivery. Such certificates contain specifications of the products, the producer and the buyer, guaranteeing third parties that this specific merchandise is a Naturland certified product.



7. The Naturland Zeichen GmbH

This company works closely with the association. Its exclusive task is the administration and control of licenses, governing the use of the Naturland trade mark (logo).

