



**To the users of the control mark
BDIH standard certified natural cosmetics**

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10 December 2013

**Animal testing for cosmetic products in China
and consequences for the evaluation of conformity according to the BDIH standard**

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

in the framework of the assessment of your products for compliance with BDIH's standard for certified natural cosmetics, IONC GmbH also has to check whether the provisions prohibiting animal testing of cosmetic products are met.

As we have noted on the basis of our research, the provisions of the cosmetics law of the People's Republic of China require that a toxicological safety assessment is mandatorily done especially for imported products in the framework of the necessary registration procedure. This regularly includes the application of animal tests.

According to the information available to us, there are currently only to a minor extent possibilities to avoid animal testing in this context. We assume that you have been following the publications on this set of problems that have been published especially in the recent months, too. Even though there are indeed noticeable signs for the Chinese authorities working to waive animal tests in future – at least in part - , IONC GmbH must take into account the current situation in the assessment of the compliance with the BDIH standard.

Given this background, we ask you to note the following points by all means:

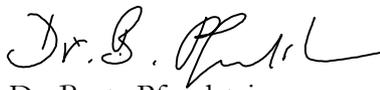
- As to products that have been applied for registration to be distributed in the People's Republic of China, IONC GmbH will assume that the necessary safety assessment has been done by means of animal testing. A compliance with the BDIH standard therefore can only be confirmed if there are plausible documents proving that for products distributed in China, no animal testing has been performed.

- IONC GmbH interprets the provisions of the BDIH standard as ruling that the animal testing ban also applies in the case where the manufacturer, though not himself personally ordering the performance of an animal testing directly, but inducing the registration of cosmetic products with the Chinese authorities and therefore accepting the animal testing that then is required.
- This also applies if the manufacturer and user of the BDIH control mark does not himself submit the registration request, but has this organised by agents or distributors. In contrast, exports to China that are carried out by independent third parties without inducement of the manufacturer will not be attributed to the label user.
- This interpretation of the BDIH standard by IONC GmbH is done in agreement with BDIH, whereas it is especially brought to bear that the stakeholders who carry out or plan exports to China must in principle be familiar with the set of problems of animal testing in China. Therefore it is expected that exports to China only are carried out if it is ensured that no animal testing is taking place.
- As proof for the absence of animal testing, plausible documents are needed. This can especially be done by confirmations of the competent registration authority or the “testing centers”, stating that for the preparation of the safety assessment, no animal testing has been carried out. Also the safety assessment itself can give information on the question whether for the purpose of its preparation an animal testing has been carried out.
- In the framework of the necessary information from manufacturers, of the evaluation for conformity and during audits, IONC GmbH will specifically ask for possible exports of cosmetic products to China, and collect information to this regard itself.
- IONC GmbH and BDIH assume that, on an individual basis, the users of the label have so far not been aware of the interpretation of the standard requirements described above as well as the actual execution of animal testing in China. Apart from products that are proven to be free from animal testing, the confirmation of conformity therefore can in future also be issued for products for which there is already an existing permission for the distribution in the PR China, or for which such permission has already been applied for, if the relevant manufacturer can prove that he has taken all necessary measures until 15th Jan. 2014 in order to stop the marketing of the products in question without delay, which includes a respective order to distributors under their control.

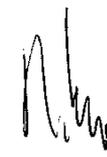
IONC GmbH and BDIH are aware of the fact that in particular cases this handling can have significant economic effects for an enterprise concerned, and that the assessment according to BDIH standard probably is the only control system to date that is drawing these consequences. However, we ask for your understanding that with respect to the standard requirements that document an unequivocal commitment to the avoidance of animal testing, the allocation of BDIH’s control mark for products tested on animals must be excluded if this animal testing must be attributed to the user of the label. Another approach would neither benefit animal protection, nor would it meet legitimate consumer expectations as to natural cosmetics free from animal testing.

BDIH and IONC GmbH are convinced that the consequent implementation of the animal testing ban rooted in the BDIH standard will further strengthen the reputation of the BDIH standard and therefore also of the manufacturers that are using it. Thus, BDIH will escort the consequences described in this information letter by comprehensive information of the public, including emphasizing the outstanding importance of a certification to BDIH standard, also in comparison to other certification systems.

For IONC GmbH


Dr. Beate Pfundstein
Food chemist

For BDIH


Rechtsanwalt Harald Dittmar
Managing Director