

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
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ORGANIZATION



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ALINORM 07/30/3

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Thirtieth Session

Rome, Italy, 2 - 7 July 2007

REPORT OF THE FIFTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

FAO Headquarters, Rome, 26 – 29 June 2007

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission held its Fifty-ninth Session at FAO Headquarters, Rome, from 26 to 29 June 2007, under the chairmanship of Dr C J S Mosha (United Republic of Tanzania), Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. A complete list of participants is attached as Appendix I to this report.

2. The Session was opened by Mr José M. Sumpsi, Assistant Director-General, Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department, FAO and Ms Suzanne Weber-Mosdorf, Assistant Director-General, Sustainable Development and Healthy Environments, WHO, who welcomed the delegates on behalf of the parent organizations. Both representatives stressed the continued strong support of their organizations to the Codex programme and highlighted the important role of the Executive Committee in advising and guiding the Commission.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda Item 1)¹

3. The Executive Committee adopted the Provisional Agenda as the agenda for the session. Following a proposal from the Secretariat, the Committee agreed to review under Agenda Item 11 (Other business) the proposed amendments to the Procedural Manual contained in ALINORM 07/30/4, Appendices XI to XV as these proposals had not been reviewed by the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP) because the Committees proposing them had only met after the CCGP in April 2007.

CRITICAL REVIEW FOR THE ELABORATION OF CODEX STANDARDS AND RELATED TEXTS

DRAFT STANDARDS AND RELATED TEXTS SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION FOR ADOPTION (Agenda Item 2a)²

4. The Secretariat introduced the document presenting relevant information on the texts submitted for adoption to the Commission, including the background to the development of the texts, the scientific advice received or requested, the status of endorsement, when applicable, and specific issues identified in the elaboration of individual texts.

5. The Committee made the following comments and recommendations on certain draft standards and related texts submitted for adoption, and recommended final adoption of all standards and related texts.

Part I – Proposed Draft and Draft Standards and Related Texts at Steps 8, 5/8 or 5 Accelerated Committee on Food Additives (CCFA)

Draft and Proposed Draft Food Additive Provisions of the General Standard for Food Additives (GSFA)

6. The Secretariat recalled that the 29th Session of the Commission had recommended that “when provisions for additives for inclusion into the GSFA result in amendments to additive provisions in Codex standards, consequential amendments should be made to the relevant standards”³ and indicated that Annex 1 of the working document listed additive provisions for adoption in the General Standard for Food Additives (maximum levels and food categories), the commodity standards which might require such amendments and current additives provisions in these standards.

7. The Member for North America, referring to the written comments of the United States and to the comments made by the Chairperson of the CCFA, expressed the view that the recommendation of the Commission concerning consequential amendments should not be applied at this stage due to the heavy workload of the CCFA and as the highest priority of that Committee was to finalise the General Standard. The Member pointed out that this issue would require systematic consideration in the CCFA, taking into account the variable relationship between food categories and commodities covered by Codex standards, and might also warrant involvement of commodity committees. This position was supported by other Members.

¹ CX/EXEC 07/59/1 Rev.1

² CX/EXEC 07/59/2, CRD 1 (comments from Chairpersons of Codex Committees and Task Forces), CRD 7 (comments of the United States)

³ ALINORM 06/29/41, para. 42

8. After some discussion, the Committee agreed that no consequential amendments should be made to commodity standards at this stage when adopting additive provisions in the GSFA and recognized that inconsistencies would exist between the General Standard and commodity standards until the General Standard was finalised. The Committee recommended that the CCFA give the highest priority to the completion of the GSFA. It also agreed to refer Annex 1 of the working document to the CCFA and to recommend that it should be forwarded to active commodity committees as appropriate.

Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP)

Proposed Draft Amendment to the Standard for Canned Sardines and Sardine Type Products

9. The Committee recalled that the Proposed Draft Amendment to include *Clupea bentincki* had been developed in the framework of the current *Procedure for the Inclusion of Additional Species in Standards for Fish and Fishery Products*, and that its finalisation had been delayed for several years due to lack of consensus. The Committee on Fish and Fishery Products had reached an agreement on the inclusion of the species in conjunction with an amendment to the labelling section, which had been endorsed by the Committee on Food Labelling. The Committee supported the adoption of the amendment and noted that the revision of the above *Procedure* was a separate issue under consideration as a proposal for new work.

Committee for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CCFFV)

10. The Member for Latin America and the Caribbean recalled that the elaboration of the Draft Standard for Table Grapes had involved several difficult issues, such as the lists of varieties or bunch weight and a wide range of views and comments on several sections; however, the CCFFV had achieved satisfactory compromises and had addressed all pending issues.

Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH)

11. The Committee noted that the CCFH had finalised an important Code of Hygienic Practice and Guidelines intended to address microbiological contamination, and expressed its appreciation to FAO and WHO for the scientific advice provided by JEMRA, which had allowed the CCFH to apply a risk based approach, in particular to the control of *Listeria monocytogenes*. It was noted that the result of risk assessment carried out by JEMRA would be further considered in the development of microbiological criteria.

Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO)

12. The Committee supported adoption of the Draft Standard for Fat Spreads and Blended Spreads with the deletion of annatto extracts, as proposed by the CCFA, and recommended that the CCFO reconsider the levels of annatto extracts in fat spreads and other relevant products in existing standards, to take into account the new ADIs established by JECFA.

Committee on General Principles (CCGP)

13. The Member for Latin America and the Caribbean recalled that there were diverging opinions in the region with respect to the Draft Working Principles on Risk Analysis for Food Safety for Application by Governments and wondered whether it was appropriate to propose the adoption of the text at Step 5/8 from the procedural point of view. Other members and coordinators, recalling the work carried out and decision taken by the CCGP, supported the adoption of the document.

FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for the Near East (CCNEA)

14. The Committee recommended adoption of all Proposed Draft Standards and noted that the methods of analysis would be considered further by the next session of the Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling and could be submitted for adoption by the next session of the Commission.

Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU)

15. The Committee recommended adoption of the Draft Revised Standard for Infant Formula and Formulas for Special Medical Purposes. It was noted that the methods of analysis had been referred back to the CCNFSDU and would be considered further at its next session, and that they would be submitted for endorsement to CCMAS and adoption when finalised. The Committee noted that written comments proposing to delete arginine from the list of essential and semi-essential amino acids in breast milk would be considered by the Commission.

Committee on Milk and Milk Products (CCMMP)

16. The Committee recalled that the Draft Standards for Individual Cheeses had been held at Step 8 by the 29th Session of the Commission with the exception of the section on labelling of country of origin, which had been referred back to the Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL). The Executive Committee noted that, although some members did not support mandatory declaration of country of origin in principle, a compromise had been reached in the CCFL and section 7.2 on labelling of country of origin had been endorsed. The Committee recommended adoption of all Draft Standards with the amendments to the additive section proposed by the CCFA, and in particular the deletion of annatto extracts and reconsideration of the levels of annatto extracts to take into account the new ADIs established by JECFA.

Part II – Proposed Draft Standards and Related Texts at Step 5

17. The Committee recommended adoption at Step 5 of the Proposed Draft Standards and Related Texts presented in the working document and made the following comments.

FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Asia

18. The Committee recalled that the Commission, when approving new work on ginseng and gochujang, had agreed that the decision as to whether the standards should be finalized as regional or international standards would be taken by the Commission after adoption at Step 5.

19. The Coordinator for Asia informed the Committee that the CCASIA had proposed that the Proposed Draft Standard for Gochujang and the Proposed Draft Standard for Ginseng be finalised after Step 5 as world wide standards respectively by the Committee on Cereals Pulses and Legumes and by the Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables.

20. In reply to some questions, the Secretariat recalled that the Proposed Draft Standards originated from CCASIA and would be adopted as Draft Regional Standards at Step 5, and that the Commission could entrust the remaining steps either to CCASIA for finalisation as regional standards or to another committee for finalisation as world-wide standards, on the basis of the general provisions in the Elaboration Procedures⁴ but that no specific guidance existed for regional standards, and noted that some further guidance might be necessary in the framework of the critical review.

21. As a matter of procedure for general application, the following proposals were put forward in the discussion: asking Coordinating Committees to prepare a new project document after Step 5 when proposing the conversion of regional standards; developing a procedure to facilitate the conversion of regional standards into international standards in order to avoid long delays; and developing specific procedures or criteria for regional standards in the critical review.

22. Several Members expressed the view that regional standards should be finalised at the regional level until Step 8 and converted afterwards if required. Some members pointed out that in the future there might be an increase in the development of regional standards and that their conversion into world wide standards was likely to increase the workload of commodity committees, and in particular the Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables which considered several standards originating from the CCASIA.

23. Some Members pointed out that the Criteria Applicable to Commodities should be applied by the Executive Committee in the critical review process to any proposal for new work in order to determine its relevance as an international or regional standard, whether it originated from a coordinating committee or any other committee.

24. After some discussion, the Committee agreed that the question of conversion of regional standards into international standards should be discussed as a general issue. Taking into account the outcome of the discussion on regional standards under Agenda Item 6b) on the structure and mandate of Codex Committees and Task Forces (see paras. 111(see paras. 111-118), the Committee agreed to recommend adoption of both Proposed Draft Standards at Step 5 as Draft Regional Standards and further elaboration in CCASIA with a view to finalisation as regional standards.

⁴ Procedures for the Elaboration of Codex Standards and Related Texts, Introduction, paragraph 7 (Procedural Manual, 16th Edition).

Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP)

25. The Committee recalled that the scientific advice provided by the microbiological evaluations of JEMRA and the Joint FAO/IOC/WHO Expert Consultation on Biotoxins in Bivalve Molluscs had been used by the CCFFP in the development of the Proposed Draft Section on Live and Raw Bivalve Molluscs in the Code of Practice and in the Proposed Draft Standard for Live and Raw Bivalve Molluscs, which included microbiological criteria and maximum levels for biotoxins.

26. The Committee noted that the detailed comments made by the Committee on Food Hygiene concerning the microbiological criteria in the Proposed Draft Standard were intended to provide guidance to the CCFFP and were not intended to delay adoption at Step 5. It was also noted that in view of the food safety issues involved, further scientific advice might be required in order to finalise the standard. The Representative of FAO informed the Committee that additional scientific advice would become available as a result of the ongoing work of FAO and WHO on *Vibrio parahaemolyticus*.

27. The Committee supported adoption of both texts at Step 5, and recommended that the CCFFP consider carefully the questions from the CCFH in the development of the standard and consider the need for further scientific advice on biotoxins.

Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CCFFV)

28. The Committee recalled that the elaboration of the Standard for Bitter Cassava had been approved as new work in 2006 in order to cover the products that were not included in the Standard for Sweet Cassava and discussed how to address the safety aspects related to bitter cassava.

29. The Member for Latin America and the Caribbean indicated that the levels of hydrogen cyanide had been established to define bitter cassava, as compared to sweet cassava, that the maximum level was not considered as a contaminant level, and highlighted the importance of the standard in order to address some trade problems encountered by exporting countries. The Member pointed out that the objective of the CCFFV was to finalise the standard by 2008 and suggested that issues related to the safety of cassava, which may need to be considered by JECFA, should be considered separately and should not delay the progress of the standard. This view was supported by other Members.

30. The Committee agreed to recommend adoption at Step 5 and also recommended that, as a separate issue, the Committee on Contaminants in Foods consider the safety of the levels of hydrogen cyanide proposed in the standard, with a view to a re-evaluation of cyanogenic glycosides by JECFA.

PROPOSALS FOR THE ELABORATION OF NEW STANDARDS AND RELATED TEXTS AND FOR THE DISCONTINUATION OF WORK (Agenda Item 2b)⁵

31. The Executive Committee recommended that the 30th Session of the Commission approve all the proposals for new work or discontinuation of work as contained in the working document.

32. The following paragraphs provide additional information on the comments and recommendations made on certain items.

Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP)

Revision of the Procedure for the Inclusion of Additional Species in the Standards for Fish and Fishery Products

33. The Executive Committee noted that the Procedure was a document for internal use by the Committee on Fish and Fishery Products to facilitate its work and thus was not intended for publication in the Codex Alimentarius.

Standard for Fresh/Live and Frozen Abalone (*Haliotis* spp)

34. Following the suggestion made by the Member for the South West Pacific that the scope of the Standard was too narrow and should be widened to cover other gastropods in view of the significance of this product in international trade, the Executive Committee agreed to refer this matter to the next session of the Committee on Fish and Fishery Products.

⁵ ALINORM 07/30/8.

Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV)

Sampling Plans Including Methodological Provisions for Controlling Minimum Drained Weight of Canned Fruits and Vegetables

35. The Executive Committee agreed to recommend to the Commission an amendment of the title by referring to canned fruits and vegetables “in packing media” as there are other canned fruits and vegetables not requiring provisions for minimum drained weight.

Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU)

Establishment and Application of Risk Analysis Principles by the Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses

36. The Executive Committee noted that this proposal was in line with the recommendation of the 26th Session of the Commission that those subsidiary bodies dealing with safety and health aspects of food standards and related texts should develop specific guidelines on risk analysis to document their work for inclusion in the Procedural Manual⁶.

37. A number of Members, while recognizing the importance of this initiative for the work of CCNFSDU vis-à-vis the growing importance of nutrition issues for public health, requested clarification on how the development of these Principles would relate to the provision of scientific advice by FAO and WHO in the area of nutrition in the coming years and the mechanisms thereof.

38. The Representative of WHO indicated that FAO and WHO were contemplating the establishment of a joint FAO/WHO scientific body, similar to JECFA, JEMRA and JMPR, to provide scientific advice for nutrition issues possibly through the re-activation of the Joint Expert Committee on Nutrition. Funding of this new activity as well as other risk assessment work requested by Codex would be covered, especially in the case of WHO, by extra-budgetary contributions raised specifically for the provision of food-related scientific advice.

39. The Executive Committee noted that the proposed Principles should be elaborated by CCNFSDU with due inputs from, and interaction with, FAO and WHO.

FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Asia (CCASIA)⁷

Standards for Chili Sauce and Sago Flour

40. The Executive Committee noted that these standards were proposed for initial development by CCASIA and finalization as international standards by the relevant worldwide committees. It was noted that, depending on the type of products covered by the term “chili sauce”, the standard might also cover those products that were extensively traded by countries outside the Asian region and that it might justify developing an international standard for this commodity. Instead, sago flour was considered to be a commodity whose trade was more limited in the Region.

41. The Committee, having regard to the guiding criteria as agreed upon under Agenda Item 6(b) concerning development of regional versus international standards (see paras. 111-118), recommended that, without prejudice to the international scope of a commodity, these standards be in principle developed and finalized as regional standards by the CCASIA. In view of the potential need for an international standard for chili sauce, the Executive Committee noted that the Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables at its next session should be informed of the status of work in the CCASIA and be invited to provide its view on the need for an international standard for chili sauce.

Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Foods derived from Biotechnology

Annex to the Guidelines for the Conduct of Food Safety Assessment of Foods derived from Recombinant-DNA Plants on Low-Level Presence of Recombinant-DNA Plant Material

42. The Coordinator for the Near East requested clarification on whether the proposed new work aimed at setting internationally agreed level for the tolerated presence of recombinant-DNA plant material in food

⁶ ALINORM 03/41, para. 197.

⁷ The Executive Committee considered this substantive item after the discussion held under Agenda Item 6(b).

consignments. The Executive Committee noted that the aim of the document was not to establish such a level but to develop recommendations on a safety assessment to be conducted in situations where low-level presence of recombinant-DNA plants that had already been authorized for commercialization in the exporting country was detected in an importing country in which the same plants were not yet authorized.

Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH)

Proposed Guidelines for Control of *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* spp. in Broiler (young bird) Chicken Meat

43. The Executive Committee noted the CCFH was proposing to develop this document following a novel, risk-based approach based on sound microbiological risk assessment. The Committee had an exchange of views on the possibility to broaden the scope to address chicken meat in general including other production methods than broiler, to account for different chicken meat production practices across the world. In this regard, it was noted that the current title reflected a major production method for which available data had allowed JEMRA to conduct risk assessment and produce scientific advice that would form a basis for the proposed new work. Expanding the scope to cover chicken meat produced using other production methods might delay progress on the document due to lack of sufficient existing scientific data as well as the difficulties associated with generating new data in different regions.

44. The Executive Committee, after some discussion, agreed to recommend to the Commission to expand the scope to cover chicken meat in general by removing the reference to “broiler (young bird)” and invited CCFH to consider re-scoping the document, as appropriate, taking into account all relevant factors including the availability of risk assessment.

45. The Representative of WHO indicated that even if the availability of data might require the development of guidelines focused on broilers, the presence and possible transfer of the pathogens in question across chicken meat produced using different methods would call for a more comprehensive approach in the future.

General Consideration

46. The Executive Committee noted that the project documents submitted to the present session of the Committee contained information that, while respecting the overall format as set out in the Procedural Manual, varied significantly in terms of quantity and quality, sometimes posing challenges to the Executive Committee to conduct the critical review properly. Codex committees, task forces and Codex Members were thus encouraged to prepare future project documents following the format set out in the current revision of the Procedural Manual and provide sufficiently detailed, relevant information with particular regard to the evidence-based assessment against each of all the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities.

CRITICAL REVIEW FOR THE ELABORATION OF CODEX STANDARDS AND RELATED TEXTS

MONITORING PROGRESS OF STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT (Agenda Item 2c)⁸

47. The Committee made the following comments and recommendations on certain proposed draft or draft standards and related texts.

Committee on General Principles (CCGP)

48. Some Members, referring to the comments of the host country, expressed the view that although the revision of the Code of Ethics was a controversial issue, there had been some progress in the last session of the Committee on General Principles as a revised document had been prepared and circulated at Step 3 for further consideration. These Members pointed out that the Committee had agreed to finalise its work by 2009 and that it was premature to consider the application of corrective action as mentioned in the third criterion which had been defined earlier by the Committee and endorsed by the Commission⁹ and should be applied when there was no prospect of reaching consensus.

⁸ CX/EXEC 07/59/3, CRD 1 (comments from Chairpersons of Codex Committees and Task Forces)

⁹ ALINORM 06/29/41, para. 13

49. The Committee noted that some Coordinating Committees had supported the revision of the Code, while the Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean had proposed to discontinue work. The Executive Committee therefore agreed that any recommendations it might make to the CCGP should take into account the different views of members and regions on further work.

50. The Committee recalled that the recommendations of the Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) in relation to some issues in the Code following the request for advice of the CCGP would be discussed at the Commission as a separate issue.

51. The Representative of WHO recalled that FAO and WHO had supported the revision of the Code in the Committee on General Principles, and highlighted the importance of a Code of Ethics in relation to the International Health Regulations and the establishment of the INFOSAN network.

52. After some discussion, the Committee agreed to encourage members to provide their comments on the Proposed Draft Code circulated at Step 3 and agreed that if no progress was made in the time frame set by the CCGP (2009), it would apply the criteria for conducting the critical review.

Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV)

53. The Executive Committee noted that the Chair of the CC PFV, referring to the deadlines set for completion of two items of work currently at Step 3, had sought guidance as to whether these two standards would be (or could be) automatically discontinued if they were not completed by the deadline set by the Committee.

54. The Committee agreed that in general it would not automatically recommend discontinuation of work if a standard was not finalised by the deadline set when work was approved, but would need all relevant information from the Committee and Chair to analyse the reasons for delays on each item of work in order to determine the most appropriate action. Some members pointed out that Committees had a responsibility to comply with the deadlines they had set and should take necessary action in order to facilitate progress and, if this was not possible, inform the Executive Committee about the reasons for the delays.

55. Some Members pointed out that this was a general issue and should be discussed further in order to decide how to proceed when work was not completed in the time frame initially set by the Committee concerned. The Committee agreed that this should be discussed further in the light of the experience gained with the application of the critical review.

FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for the Near East (CCNEA)

56. The Committee noted that a Proposed Draft Code of Practice for Street Vended Foods was under development in the Coordinating Committee for the Near East. The Coordinators for Africa, for Latin America and the Caribbean and for the Near East, while recalling that similar codes already existed in two Codex regions, proposed to develop an international code rather than a series of regional codes in view of the general interest in this type of Code.

57. The Committee noted that the background to the consideration of this issue in Codes was as follows. The Representative of FAO recalled that, as the safety of street vended foods was a major concern of member countries in several regions, FAO and WHO had developed considerable efforts in order to address these issues through specific recommendations, training material and several technical cooperation projects at the regional and national level. The Committee also noted that the Committee on Food Hygiene, the Commission and several Coordinating Committees had extensively discussed the approach to be taken in the framework of Codex, as a result of which the Coordinating Committees for Latin America and the Caribbean and for Africa had decided to develop regional codes of practice. In other regions, and especially in Asia, it had been agreed to address this question at the national level, taking into account the guidance provided by FAO and WHO, including the Code of Practice for Street Vended Foods for Asia which was developed during the FAO workshop in Kuala Lumpur prior to the 8th Session of the CCASIA, but no regional code was developed. The Committee recalled that new work or revision of the current codes could be proposed either at the regional or international level if Codex members considered that it was necessary.

58. The Representative of WHO drew the attention of the Committee to the principles in A Guide to Healthy Food Markets (2006), as well as the Essential Requirements for Street Vended Foods (1996), which were of general application, showing that global description of best practice in this area is possible.

59. Some Members pointed out that the purpose of Codex was to harmonise food safety standards especially when differences existed at the national level and therefore the development of an international code would be very useful to provide guidance to governments, in view of the importance of street vended foods in many countries, and it could be based on the experience gained with harmonisation within regions.

60. The Committee did not reach a conclusion and the Chair proposed to consider this question in a more general context, following the consideration of the conversion of regional standards into international standards under Agenda Item 8b). Some Members however noted that in the present case the situation was different as the question under discussion was not the conversion of the Code under development in the Near East Region but the elaboration of a single international text, taking into account that two regional codes already existed. Due to time constraints it was not possible to reconsider this question later in the meeting.

Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL)

61. The Committee recalled that the texts concerning the labelling of foods obtained through GM/GE currently at Steps 7 and 3 in the Committee on Food Labelling were very controversial and had been under consideration since 1996.

62. The Member for North America informed the Committee that the Chair of the CCFL had not been able to provide comments due to travel and recalled the discussion that had taken place in the Committee, pointing out that a decision would need to be made on how to address this issue in the framework of the critical review.

63. Some Members expressed the view that it was difficult for the Executive Committee to carry out the critical review, especially for controversial issues, when no comments were available from the Chair. Some Members pointed out that the comments from Chairs of committees were essential especially to understand why work on a specific item should continue. Other Members pointed out that the Chairs could provide useful information but the discussion that took place in any committee was mainly reflected in the report, and that the views of the Committee itself were the most important element. Some Members also stated that the role of the Chair was not to provide arguments for continuation of work, as there may not be consensus in some committees in this respect, but rather to provide clarification as to the reasons for lack of consensus or other difficulties faced by the Committee in the progress of its work.

64. One Member expressed the view that it was premature to apply the criteria for the conduct of the critical review as the CCFL had agreed to discuss further the issue and would hold a working group for that purpose in early 2008, and therefore the Executive Committee should review the issue after the next session of the CCFL. Other Members pointed out that this item had been under consideration for more than ten years without any progress and there was no prospect of reaching consensus as the positions expressed by governments had not changed for many sessions, and that the differences in approaches were well known and did not require additional clarification. These Members therefore proposed that the Executive Committee should exercise its critical review function and propose corrective action, such as the suspension of this item of work for five years, in order to ensure an efficient use of the resources available to Codex and to governments.

65. After some further debate, the Committee agreed to reconsider this question at its 61st Session in June 2008, and to consider the outcome the next session of the CCFL (May 2008) in order to decide whether to apply the criteria for conduct of the critical review and to consider corrective action.

Committee on Milk and Milk Products (CCMMP)

66. The Member for the South West Pacific informed the Committee that the Chair of the CCMMP, hosted by New Zealand, had made the following comments.

67. As regards the Proposed Draft Amendment of the Standard for Fermented Milks Pertaining to Composite Fermented Milk Products, based on the outcome of the working group, it was expected that the work on this amendment would allow its completion by the target date of 2010.

68. As regards the Proposed Draft Standard for Processed Cheese, substantive issues remained unsolved and were likely to affect the progress of the standard. The working group held between sessions had failed to resolve outstanding differences including cheese content and provisions on the use of emulsifiers, therefore it might be appropriate for the Executive Committee to ask the CCMMP to consider whether this work should be suspended or discontinued.

69. Some Members pointed out that the issues highlighted above should be considered in the Committee concerned to determine whether further progress was possible, and that any difficulties should be clearly identified in order to allow the Executive Committee to provide advice as required.

70. The Executive Committee agreed that it was not possible to give any advice at this stage as it was the responsibility of the CCMMP to consider the outstanding issues in the development of the Proposed Draft Standard for Processed Cheese and to decide whether work should proceed. If it was not possible to reach consensus, the next session of the CCMMP should provide all relevant information to the 61st Session of the Executive Committee in order to facilitate the critical review.

71. The Executive Committee expressed its appreciation to all the Chairs or host countries of Committees and Task Forces who had provided comments on standards under development as it was very useful in the conduct of the critical review.

STRATEGIC PLANNING OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (Agenda Item 3)¹⁰

72. The Committee recalled that, as recommended by the 58th Session of the Committee and agreed by the 29th Session of the Commission, the draft Strategic Plan 2008-2013 as presented in ALINORM 06/29/3A Appendix II had been circulated to all Coordinating Committees for comments, prior to the final adoption by the Commission in July 2007.

73. The Committee, at its present session, considered the draft Strategic Plan, taking into consideration comments from the Coordinating Committees as reproduced in ALINORM 07/30/9B.

74. In view of the limitation of time available to the plenary, the Committee decided to hold an in-session Sub-Committee meeting, chaired by Mr Wim Van Eck, Vice-Chair of the Commission and consisting of all Coordinators as members, whose terms of reference were to review the comments and proposals made by the Coordinating Committees and to provide a revised draft Strategic Plan for discussion at the plenary. The Committee considered the outcome of work of the Sub-Committee as presented as CRD 8, made observations on the draft Strategic Plan and agreed on editorial and substantive amendments as follows:

Part 1

75. The Committee noted that no substantive comments had been forwarded from the Coordinating Committees on this Part and, therefore, agreed to maintain the current text with a few editorial changes.

Part 2 - Goal 1

76. The Committee agreed to add the text “while respecting the basic objectives of the CAC” in Descriptions of Activities 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4, as proposed by the Coordinating Committee for Europe, in order to recall the dual mandate of the Commission. It was also agreed to add “Coordinating Committees” in Responsible Parties for Activity 1.2 as the Terms of Reference of the Coordinating Committees allowed them to develop regional standards related to food safety.

77. With respect to Activity 1.3 related to food labelling and nutrition, the Committee agreed to add the reference to “the WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health”, with a view to recognizing the importance of the WHO Global Strategy in relation to the work being carried out by the Codex Committees on Food Labelling and on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses. In this regard, the Member for Latin America and the Caribbean expressed its concern that the reference to the WHO Global Strategy would be pre-empting future discussion of the relevant Codex Committees on this matter. The Committee agreed that it was appropriate to insert a short and specific reference to the WHO Global Strategy, since Codex, when elaborating standards and relevant texts, shall give full consideration to resolutions and decisions of its parent organizations that are relevant within the framework of the Codex mandate. The Committee however recognized that this would not pre-empt decisions to be taken by the Commission and its subsidiary bodies on what concrete actions might be necessary.

78. The Committee also agreed on amendments to the texts for Activities 1.5 and 1.7 for clarification purpose.

¹⁰ ALINORM 06/29/3A Appendix II, ALINORM 07/30/9B, CRD 8 (Report of the Sub-Committee on the draft Strategic Plan)

Part 2 - Goal 2

79. With regard to Activity 2.2, the Committee considered the question from the Coordinating Committee for North America and South-West Pacific as to whether the timeframe “by 2008” to complete elaboration of risk assessment policies should be applied to the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses which was yet in an early stage of this work. The Committee agree to delete the timeframe “2008” and make some other minor changes in order to allow certain flexibility.

80. The Committee noted a proposal made by the Member for Latin America and the Caribbean to include an additional activity which would address the strengthening of scientific advisory groups, to improve their efficiency as well as to equip them with necessary resources, particularly in the area of pesticide residues. The Committee noted that the concerns expressed in relation to this proposal were related amongst others to the lack of capacity to generate scientific data in developing countries and that some of these concerns might best be addressed outside Codex, for instance through international FAO/WHO workshops on pesticide residues.

81. The Representative of FAO, speaking on behalf of FAO and WHO, clarified that both organizations had assisted member states to enhance their capacity on data provision and highlighted that the FAO/WHO Meeting on Enhancing Developing Country Participation in Scientific Advice Activities (12-15 November 2005, Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro) was one of the useful events and that several recommendations were provided in this regard. The Representative expressed the willingness of both organizations to continue efforts to fulfil their mandate by means of enhancing qualitative/quantitative scientific advice.

82. Some other minor changes were made regarding Activities 2.2, 2.3 and 2.6.

Part 2 - Goal 4

83. With regard to Activity 4.2, the Committee noted the proposal made by the Coordinating Committee for Asia to add the text that was similar to the last sentence of Description in Activity 4.1, for clarity. However the Committee decided not to change the text for Activity 4.2, considering that the proposed addition was covered by the objective indicated in Article 1 (b) of the Codex Statutes in relation to promotion of coordination with international organizations to avoid duplication of work.

Part 2 - Goal 5

84. The Committee agreed to the changes proposed by the Member for Latin America and the Caribbean for Activity 5.2, with a view to ensuring that all written comments be taken into consideration in the Codex process as well as adhering to the guideline for the conduct of the Codex meetings in the Procedural Manual.

Part 3

85. The Committee noted that most of the Coordinating Committees had expressed their support to the recommendation that was made by the 58th Session of the Committee and endorsed by the 29th Session of the Commission that the Executive Committee should use the format of Table 2, Part 3 of the draft Strategic Plan as a new tracking mechanism for effective implementation of the Critical Review.

86. The Committee agreed to the text in Part 3 with some changes consequential to the changes made in Part 2 and some other editorial amendments for clarity.

Status of the draft Strategic Plan 2008 - 2013

87. The Committee agreed to forward the draft Strategic Plan as amended (see Appendix II) to the 30th Session of the Commission for adoption.

FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY MATTERS (Agenda Item 4)

Codex Budget 2006-07 and estimated budget for 2008-09¹¹

88. The Secretariat introduced document ALINORM 07/30/9 containing information on the budget for the current biennium (2006-07) (Table 1) and estimates for the budget for the biennium 2008-09 (with and without cost increase). The estimates were based on the assumption of two sessions of the Commission, three sessions of the Executive Committee, one session of each Coordinating Committee and maintaining the

¹¹ ALINORM 07/30/9; CRD 9

current publication/document distribution policy (Table 2A: assuming existing language coverage; Table 2B: assuming the FAO Conference adopts Russian as an official language of FAO and the Codex Alimentarius Commission does the same for sessions of the CCEURO and the CAC). The Secretariat mentioned that the possibility of using the Portuguese language in the Coordinating Committee for Africa had not been included in Table 2B but the estimate of the necessary funds was indicated in the document. The Secretariat noted that the document was submitted late due to the complexity of the budget preparation process in the parent organizations.

89. The Representative of WHO informed the Committee that WHO's overall budget level for 2008-09 had been decided by the World Health Assembly in May 2007 and that a decision on the budget level for Codex was about to be taken.

90. The Representative of FAO informed the Committee that the budget preparation for FAO was delayed but that it was expected that due consideration would be given to the high priority of the Codex programme in the Organization and, pending the decision by the FAO Conference in November 2007 the 2006-07 budget for Codex would be maintained on a best-effort basis, with the addition of the estimated cost increase.

91. Members of the Executive Committee made comments as follows:

- The information in the document was based on estimations and it would be difficult to have a substantive discussion on it in the Executive Committee and the Commission;
- Members should concentrate on requesting maintenance or increase of the budget level for Codex in real terms;
- The Executive Committee should be attributed four sessions during the next biennium, to be able to adequately exercise its strategic management functions;
- A higher contribution of WHO to the budget of the Codex programme was desirable in view of Codex taking on more health related work e.g. in CCFH and in the framework of the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health. Codex members should explore means to ensure a higher contribution from WHO;
- The Strategic Plan should serve the purpose of better planning the Codex budget and the contributions of the parent organisations;
- Costs for translation, interpretation and publications take up a significant amount of the Codex budget yet translated documents arrive in many cases too late for a proper preparation of meetings. The usefulness of maintaining the current system could be questioned as it was expensive but did not satisfy the need of the users of the translations in terms of timeliness and quality;
- The backcharging costs incurred to the Codex Secretariat should be made more transparent;
- Costs for host governments of Codex subsidiary bodies were also rising and some hosts encountered funding problems in contributing on the one hand as hosts but also to priority areas such as the Codex Trust Fund or capacity building programmes in food safety;
- Alternative funding options could be considered such as voluntary contributions from members and requesting payments from observers for meeting attendance and documentation.

92. The Representative of WHO stated that the need for maintaining the same purchasing power was not an adequate justification for soliciting a higher contribution of WHO to the Codex budget; instead it would have to be clearly explained to the World Health Assembly what Codex should do with additional funds. In case of missing resources, the option of discontinuing some work items should be considered. It should be noted that a higher contribution to the Codex budget could lead to lower contributions to activities related to scientific advice. The Representative expressed the view that the outcome of the Joint Evaluation of the Codex Programme had resulted in three main recommendations to Codex: speeding up the standard setting process, facilitating participation from developing countries and more attention to health issues. The WHO contribution had been increased by 30 % between the 2002-03 and 2004-05 biennia and the Codex Trust Fund had been created. The Representative indicated that the budget expenditure of the Codex programme was one of the issues presently discussed at the ADG-level in FAO/WHO meetings on Codex and related activities.

93. The Representative of FAO stressed that between the 2002-03 and 2004-05 biennia FAO had increased its contribution to Codex by 38 % and by a further 6% between the 2004-05 and 2006-07 biennia, and that improvements in the speed of work could be seen. The Representative expressed his desire that WHO would increase its share in the Codex budget in the near future. He also pointed out that the current capacity of work of the Secretariat was only achieved thanks to voluntary contributions from member countries through secondment of three staff members (1 P-5 and 2 P-3) and that its long-term sustainability was not guaranteed.

94. The Secretariat recalled that in the 2006-07 budget the purchasing power of the 2004-05 budget had not been maintained, which had forced the Codex Secretariat to introduce a series of cost saving measures (cancellation of one session of the Executive Committee, discontinuation of printing working documents and volumes of Codex Alimentarius). This had made the budget structure leaner and focussed on the core business of Codex: the organization of meetings with the related costs of travel, venue facilities, documents, translation and interpretation. Any future cuts in the budget should directly be matched with cuts in the number of meetings. One-fifth to one-fourth of all FAO documentation in the 2002-03 biennium was believed to have originated in the Codex programme. The Secretariat also recalled that a significant portion of Codex expenditure was made in Italy and Switzerland and that the US dollar had lost approximately 30% of its value against the Euro over the 2002-2007 period.

95. The Secretariat explained the structure of the staff of the Codex Secretariat under the regular budget consisting of 7 professional staff members (1 D-1, 2 P-5 , 2 P-4 and 2 P-3) and 7 general service staff members (1 G-5 and 2 G-3 dealing with administration and correspondence, 1 G-5 and 3 G-4 dealing with documentation). The number of regular and extra-budgetary posts in the Codex Secretariat now allowed adequate servicing of all meetings but without a safety margin to protect against sustained post vacancies or long term sick leave. The Secretariat explained further that the estimated 16.2 % increase in staff costs was not linked to any increase in the number of staff but was due, among others, to revalorisation of the remuneration of Rome-based general service staff following a recent recommendation by the International Civil Service Commission, as well as compensations to salaries of professional staff due to the weakness of the US dollar against the Euro. The Secretariat indicated that, with more staff, meetings could be serviced more adequately and documentation produced quicker.

96. The Secretariat cautioned that while reducing the length of sessions of the Executive Committees might lead to some savings, many of the costs would remain much the same such as travel costs for members from developing countries and other logistical costs. Concerning the proposal to outsource certain services such as printing or translation to lower-cost countries the Secretariat explained that as long as the Codex programme was administered by FAO its operation should comply with FAO rules whereby the use of internal services had to be considered unless they could not provide the services needed. Therefore the issue of increased outsourcing needs to be considered as an organization-wide matter by FAO, and went beyond the authority of the Codex Secretariat. The Secretariat clarified that the addition of new languages was envisaged only for two of the Coordinating Committees and the Commission and would thus not have any impact on expenditures of host governments of Codex Committees and Task Forces.

97. The Secretariat presented in CRD 9 a first level breakdown of the backcharging costs incurred to the Codex Secretariat in the 2004-05 biennium. The document showed that three-quarters of the backcharging were related to translation and internal printing costs.

98. The Secretariat informed the Committee that FAO would by January 2010 introduce International Public Sector Accounting Standards, like other UN organizations, which might make reporting and cost breakdown easier. Additional savings could be made by fully implementing Rule XIII.4 of the Rules of Procedure which states that the operating costs of Codex Committees should be borne by the host governments and the Secretariat was presently in negotiations with host governments to ensure this. The Secretariat noted that presently not all host governments were able to provide the same level of quality of translations due to differences in experience and that for this reason a number of documents, especially the final draft Codex standards, presently had to be revised by FAO internal services at the costs of the Secretariat to ensure linguistic and terminological accuracy.

99. The Executive Committee thanked the Secretariat and FAO and WHO for the information provided and reiterated that the Commission should encourage member governments to call on FAO and WHO, in their governing body meetings, to give an adequate level of resources to the Codex programme.

Consideration of alternative funding mechanisms¹²

100. The Secretariat introduced document ALINORM 07/30/9-Add.1 which had been prepared in cooperation with FAO and WHO, at the request of the 58th Session of the Executive Committee and the 29th Session of the Commission in order to examine how sustainable funding for Codex could be achieved through alternative financing mechanisms, if any. The Secretariat stressed the preliminary nature of the document, which was meant to provide a factual overview of legal and financing arrangements followed by different international conventions and agreements, including Codex, and did not include in-depth comparative analysis of all possible options.

101. The document first traced a brief history of Codex funding mechanisms since the creation of the programme and explained the legal status of Codex as an Article VI body established under the FAO Constitution, in contrast to Article XIV bodies and other treaties and conventions.

102. The document further briefly touched upon the advantages and challenges of the different options if they were to be applied to the Codex programme: (a) mandatory assessed contributions, (b) voluntary assessed contributions and (c) regular budget (status quo). The document finally suggested that any considerations on Codex funding should be looked at together with the funding mechanisms for the expert bodies providing scientific advice to Codex.

103. The Executive Committee noted the following comments from Members:

- More in-depth information was needed to allow better appreciation of the different options;
- Mandatory assessed contributions might not be seen favourably by members' treasuries as they would be additional to the base-contributions to the parent organisations;
- Possibilities should be explored that would ensure more secure and predictable funding for Codex under the current arrangements, e.g. by creating a special protected budget line for Codex in the regular budgets of FAO and WHO;
- The commonalities and differences among the sister organizations under the WTO-SPS Agreement (Codex, IPPC and OIE) should be analysed.

104. The Executive Committee thanked the Secretariat for the preparation of the document and decided that in view of its late availability, the document, together with any further information, if available, be considered again at the 60th Session of the Executive Committee.

FAO/WHO Budgets for Scientific Advice¹³

105. The Executive Committee thanked FAO and WHO for the information provided in INF.3 and noted that the figures for 2008/09 were still provisional but foresaw an increase of the contribution for matters related to nutrition. It was also noted that the document did not include costs for human resources in the parent organizations.

106. The Executive Committee agreed to recommend that FAO and WHO should actively seek extrabudgetary resources to enhance the provision of scientific advice in a manner that would not compromise the neutrality of the expert advice obtained, while striving to secure as much resources from the respective regular budgets as possible. The Executive Committee also recognized the need to maintain an optimal balance between the resources allocated to the Codex Programme and those allocated to the provision of scientific advice.

PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF CODEX MEETINGS 2007-2009 (Agenda Item 5)¹⁴

107. Due to time constraints this item was not discussed.

¹² ALINORM 07/30/9-Add.1

¹³ CAC/30 INF/3

¹⁴ ALINORM 07/30/9B.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JOINT FAO/WHO EVALUATION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS AND OTHER FAO AND WHO WORK ON FOOD STANDARDS (Agenda Item 6)

a) General Implementation Status¹⁵

108. Due to time constraints the Committee did not discuss this sub-agenda item.

b) Review of Codex Committee Structures and Mandates of Codex Committees and Task Forces¹⁶

109. The Committee recalled that the 29th Session of the Commission had considered proposals put forward by the Secretariat on the structure and mandates of Codex Committees and Task Forces, had requested government comments through a Circular Letter (CL 2006/29-CAC) and had invited Coordinating Committees to provide their views on these proposals.

110. Due to time constraints, the Committee agreed to concentrate discussion on proposal 8 as presented in CL 2006/29-CAC since it also had bearing on the decisions that needed to be taken in relation to the critical review in respect of certain work under consideration by the Coordinating Committee for Asia under Agenda Items 2a and b.

Proposal 8

111. The Committee had an extensive exchange of views on this proposal, with several Members in support of the proposal as presented, recognizing that the expertise for the development of standards on commodities of a regional nature would most probably lie within regional committees more so than in commodity committees which would allow for speedy development of such standards, but that the conversion of these standards to international standards should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. It was also noted that this transfer of the work on commodity standards at Step 5, from coordinating committees to worldwide committees may delay ongoing work in the latter committees when their workload was already high. While supporting the proposal in principle, many delegations were of the opinion that the proposal did not provide flexibility as to when and how such a conversion could be considered. One Member expressed the view that priority should be given to the development of international standards rather than regional standards within Codex while recognizing terms of reference of coordinating committees allowed for development of regional standards.

112. Another Member was of the opinion that judgment on whether a standard was to be developed as either a regional or worldwide standard depended on the scope of the proposed work and further noted that most regional standards covered mostly quality issues and that in order to inform the broader discussion on the need for and form of commodity standards within Codex, there was a need to see how these standards were of benefit either because it allowed for acceptance of certain commodities in international trade or because it provided guidance on core safety and quality issues. It was also noted that any country could participate in the discussion on draft regional standards, but that amendments to those standards could only be decided upon by members of that particular region and that this might require further consideration from the procedural point of view.

113. The Committee noted that a broader discussion needed to be held on both strategic as well as management issues related to the development of commodity standards and agreed that the bureau of the Committee, consisting of the Chairperson and the three Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission, would undertake a study to identify a set of draft procedures and criteria for use by the Committee in its critical review process and eventually by the Commission which would, amongst others, assist the Commission in streamlining its work on development of regional standards as opposed to worldwide standards and their conversion into worldwide standards, for consideration and discussion by the next Session of the Committee.

114. In light of the discussion above the Committee agreed to recommend the Commission adopt, on a temporary basis, Proposal 8 amended as follows:

¹⁵ ALINORM 07/30/9C Part I

¹⁶ ALINORM 07/30/9C Part II, CL 2006/29-CAC, LIM 11 (comments from Brazil, Malaysia and South Africa)

- “a) *The commodity work of coordinating committees should concentrate on the development of regional standards, in compliance with their terms of reference. Conversion of a regional standard into a worldwide standard should, in principle, be considered after its adoption at Step 8, at the request of Codex members or a coordinating committee or at the recommendation of the commodity committee concerned, substantiated by a project document to be reviewed by the Executive Committee in the framework of the critical review, taking into account the programme of work of commodity committees concerned.*
- b) *The proposal for new work for commodities having international trade potential should preferably be submitted through a worldwide commodity committee if such committee exists and is active, or in other cases, to the Commission through the Executive Committee.”.*

115. The Member for Africa cautioned that the temporary measures adopted should not constitute unnecessary barriers for conversion of regional standards into world-wide standards and stressed that the process of standards development by developing countries should be facilitated and encouraged as a way of enhancing their participation in the work of Codex.

116. The proposal as amended would allow for flexibility in the procedure as to when a regional standard could be converted to a worldwide standard as well as the role of the Executive Committee to oversee and coordinate the commodity work undertaken by worldwide and regional committees.

117. It was clarified that both sections a) and b) of the guiding principles above would go hand-in-hand as to avoid parallel development of standards on the same or similar commodity as a regional as well as worldwide standard, that these principles would be reviewed in light of the progress of the study undertaken by the bureau (see para. 113) and that they would not impact on the status of adopted Codex standards.

118. Such study could have regard to different cases and scenarios, including the nature of standards and their impact on trade, and could include recommendations on the possible procedures that would ensure expeditious conversion of regional standards into worldwide standards.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE REPORTS OF THE COMMISSION, CODEX COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES (Agenda Item 7)¹⁷

119. Due to time constraints this item was not discussed.

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (Agenda Item 8)

(a) *General Matters*¹⁸

120. The Executive Committee did not discuss this sub-item due to time constraints.

(b) *Applications from international non-governmental organizations for Observer Status in Codex*¹⁹

121. The Executive Committee was invited, in accordance with Rule IX.6 of the Rules of Procedure to provide advice regarding the applications for observer status from five international non-governmental organizations neither having status with FAO nor official relations with WHO. Information from the applicant organizations was included in Annexes 1 to 5 of document CX/EXEC 07/59/4 and CRD 2 to 6.

122. The Secretariat informed the Committee that the *Principles Concerning the Participation of International Non-Governmental Organizations* in the Work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission were now fully implemented and the Codex Secretariat engaged in an exchange of communications with each applicant before a complete dossier was prepared for consideration by the Executive Committee. This had resulted in a significant increase in the workload of the Codex Secretariat.

¹⁷ ALINORM 07/30/9D and ALINORM 07/30/9D-Add.1

¹⁸ ALINORM 07/30/9E

¹⁹ CX/EXEC 07/59/4, CRD 2 (AAF), CRD 3 (CEN), CRD 4 (CIDE), CRD 5 (HIPA) and CRD 6 (IAI)

AAF (European Starch Industry Association)

123. The Secretariat introduced the application which had been reviewed by the Codex Secretariat and the legal offices of FAO and WHO and informed the Committee that AAF had taken up all legal and administrative functions of the Codex observer AAC “Association des amidonneries de céréales de l’Union européenne” as of 1st January 2006. Because of a change in the statutes of the organization a re-application of the new body had been requested. If granted observer status the AAF would replace the AAC as Codex observer.

124. The Executive Committee recommended to the Directors-General of FAO and WHO to grant AAF observer status with the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

CEN (European Committee for Standardization)

125. The Secretariat introduced the application which had been reviewed by the Codex Secretariat and the legal offices of FAO and WHO and highlighted specifically the information given by the applicant on the composition of its membership and the Vienna Agreement (1991) between CEN and ISO which laid down that CEN and ISO would, as much as possible, adopt each other’s work as their own standards. The agreement recognised the primacy of international standards (WTO Code of Conduct) but the agreement also recognised that particular needs (of the Single European Market, for example) might require the development of standards for which a need had not been recognized at the international level.

126. The Secretariat confirmed that on the basis of the information received, CEN was not to be considered as a sub-organisation under the ISO umbrella but as a distinct regional standard-setting body.

127. The Executive Committee recommended to the Directors-General of FAO and WHO to grant CEN observer status with the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

CIDE (European Dehydrators Association)HIPA (Honey International Packers Association)IAI (International Aluminium Institute)

128. The Secretariat introduced the applications which had been reviewed by the Codex Secretariat and the legal offices of FAO and WHO and had been found to satisfy all criteria required.

129. The Executive Committee recommended to the Directors-General of FAO and WHO to grant CIDE, HIPA and IAI observer status with the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

FAO/WHO PROJECT AND TRUST FUND FOR ENHANCED PARTICIPATION IN CODEX (Agenda Item 9)²⁰

130. Due to time constraints this item was not discussed.

OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM FAO AND WHO (Agenda Item 10)²¹

131. Due to time constraints this item was not discussed.

OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 11)**Amendments to the Procedural Manual**

132. As agreed at the adoption of the agenda, the Committee reviewed the proposed amendments to the Procedural Manual contained in ALINORM 07/30/4, Appendices XI to XV as these had not been reviewed by the Codex Committee on General Principles.

133. The Secretariat informed the Committee that a review by the Secretariat had found that most of the proposals could be considered for adoption. However in part B of Appendix XIV, the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) proposed changes to the existing sub-section on Food Additives and Contaminants in the section *Relations between Commodity Committees and General Committees* in the Procedural Manual.

²⁰ ALINORM 07/30/9F

²¹ ALINORM 07/30/9G and ALINORM 07/30/9G-Add.1

If this proposal was adopted, a reference to contaminants would be lost in this sub-section as no alternative or complementary text had been received from the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF).

134. The Executive Committee agreed to a proposal from the Secretariat and decided to recommend to the Commission to defer the adoption of the amendment proposed in Part B of Appendix XIV, and request the Secretariat to review the current sections *Format for Commodity Standards* and *Relations between Commodity Committees and General Committees* for consistency in conjunction with the pending proposal from CCFA with a view to preparing a revised proposed amendment which would be submitted through the relevant committees where possible and the Executive Committee to the 31st Session of the Commission for adoption.

Report of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues

135. The Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean, speaking on behalf of the Delegation of Argentina, informed the Executive Committee of the concern of the Argentinean authorities regarding the final report of the 39th Session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR), distributed as ALINORM 07/30/24. The Coordinator pointed out that during the adoption of the report by the CCPR, the Delegation of Argentina had formally requested the inclusion of a paragraph to reflect the comments made during the meeting. To this end, the Delegation drafted a specific paragraph, handed it to the FAO/WHO Secretariat and requested its inclusion in the report under Agenda Item 10. This paragraph contained in CRD 14 (of the CCPR) reads: “The Argentine delegation made reference to its written comments and stressed the importance of this matter in relation to trade problems arising when importing countries applied national or regional MRLs which were lower than the Codex MRLs, insofar as these were not sustained on the basis of a scientific risk assessment justifying this divergence”. However in the final report this paragraph was not included. For this reason the Coordinator requested that a corrigendum be issued to ALINORM 07/30/24, to include, between paragraphs 207 and 208 (197 and 198 of the draft report), the paragraph drafted by Argentina.

136. The Secretariat informed the Committee that the fact as understood by the Secretariat was that the Delegations of Argentina and India had requested the inclusion in the report of certain points which had been raised during the discussions. As the same points had been raised by other delegations, it was proposed to include in the report a text of a general nature without reference to the specific names of the delegations. According to the understanding of the Secretariat this was accepted by the CCPR at the time of the adoption of the report by all delegations, including the Delegation of Argentina. The Secretariat had consulted the Vice-Chairperson of the CCPR presiding over the session who confirmed the understanding of the facts by the Secretariat.

137. The Secretariat indicated further that after consultation with the Chairperson of the CCPR and the Chairperson of the Commission, the Secretariat could envisage circulating the observations of Argentina to all Codex Contact Points.

APPENDIX I

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APPENDIX II****CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION
DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-2013¹****PART 1****STRATEGIC VISION STATEMENT**

The Codex Alimentarius Commission envisages a world afforded the highest attainable levels of consumer protection including food safety and quality. To this end, the Commission will develop internationally agreed standards and related texts for use in domestic regulation and international trade in food that are based on scientific principles and fulfil the objectives of consumer health protection and fair practices in food trade.

INTRODUCTION

1. This document sets out the strategic plan for the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), stating strategic goals of the Commission (Part 1) and incorporating a list of programme areas and planned activities with a clearly defined timetable (Part 2). The strategic vision and goals for the CAC underpin the high priority attached to food safety by its parent organizations, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). *The Strategic Framework for FAO: 2000-2015* accords high priority to promoting policy and regulatory frameworks for food at the international and national levels. Several resolutions adopted by the World Health Assembly recognized the need to highlight health considerations in international food trade and acknowledged the importance of the CAC for ensuring the highest levels of consumer health protection. These resolutions and related documents² urged WHO to work towards integrating food safety as one of its essential public health functions with the goal of developing sustainable, integrated food safety systems for the reduction of health risks along the entire food chain. It is understood that Codex, when elaborating standards, guidelines and recommendations, gives full consideration to those resolutions and decisions from WHO and FAO that are relevant within the framework of the Codex mandate. The fundamental mandate of the CAC is to develop international standards, guidelines and other recommendations for protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in the food trade.
2. The CAC has always operated in an environment of change and technological advancement. The growth in world food trade, advances in modern communication and increasing mobility of populations are all contributing to elevating the profile and significance of food safety and regulation. There is growing international concern related to a perceived emergence of or increase in food-borne diseases. Consumers around the world are seeking ever-greater assurances about the safety and quality of foods they eat. In its endeavour to promote food safety and quality, the CAC needs to ensure more effective participation and involvement of all members in setting globally relevant standards and to consider opportunities for strengthening partnerships with all stakeholders, in particular consumers and their representative organizations, at the global and national levels. It is also likely that developing countries will account for an increasing proportion of global food and agricultural trade. CAC, FAO and WHO are striving to respond to the new challenges and keep abreast of most recent developments.³
3. The recognition and status that Codex standards, guidelines and other recommendations acquired under the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures has presented challenges and brought responsibilities, including the need to

¹ This plan will be updated in the light of the status of all current and projected activities at the time of adoption by the Commission in 2007.

² WHO Global Strategy for Food Safety (WHO, 2002).

³ Joint FAO/WHO Evaluation of the Codex Alimentarius and Other FAO and WHO Food Standards Work.

ensure that Codex standards and related texts are based on scientific principles and meet the needs and mandate of the organization. The WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade is also of great relevance, given the significance of the provisions pertaining to product description, labelling, packaging and quality descriptors for consumer information and fair practices in trade. The CAC has an important role in providing for essential composition and quality requirements that are not more trade-restrictive than necessary. The CAC needs to maintain its pre-eminent status as the internationally recognized body for food standard-setting and to call for the use of its standards to the widest extent possible by all members as a basis for domestic regulation and international trade. This will help members to be more aware of the importance of the international harmonization of food safety and quality standards, as well as the enhancement of food control systems for ensuring food safety and quality.

DECISION-MAKING BASED ON SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE

4. The CAC, as a risk management body, does not undertake scientific evaluations *per se* but relies on the opinions of scientific expert bodies convened by FAO and WHO on specific issues. These expert bodies such as the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA), the Joint FAO/WHO Meetings on Pesticide Residues (JMPR) and the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meetings on Microbiological Risk Assessment (JEMRA) and other *ad hoc* expert consultations are functionally separate from the CAC and its subsidiary bodies and do not directly fall within the scope of the present Strategic Plan. The mandates, functions, composition and agendas of these bodies are established by FAO and WHO. The independence of the expert bodies is critical to the objectivity of their opinions, and meetings of these bodies should interact with the CAC in accordance with the Working Principle for Risk Analysis for Application in the Framework of the Codex Alimentarius. There is considerable synergy between the scientific bodies of FAO and WHO and the intergovernmental bodies of the CAC in order to take decisions based on scientific evidence.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

5. To enable the overall achievement of the strategic vision, the CAC must take action jointly with its parent organizations and its members. The Commission urges FAO and WHO to mobilise sufficient resources to allow the CAC to fulfil its mandate. Their other key roles are to provide scientific advice requested by the CAC and to offer technical assistance to developing members so that they can effectively participate in the standard-setting process and build capacity for the development of sound food control systems. The Commission fully recognises the efforts of the members of the CAC, especially those which provide significant financial and other support to the work of the CAC as host governments of subsidiary bodies or as contributors to extra-budgetary programmes of FAO and WHO. In close cooperation with the partners above, the Commission will focus on the following goals to achieve its strategic vision.

GOAL 1: PROMOTING SOUND REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS

6. An effective food control system is critical in enabling all countries to ensure the safety of their foods entering international trade and to ensure that imported foods conform to national requirements. International harmonization based on Codex standards, guidelines and recommendations is essential to promoting a global approach to consumer health protection, including systems for the reduction of food-borne risks, and minimizing the negative effects of technical regulations on international trade. For this purpose, the CAC will provide essential guidance for its members through the continued development of international standards and guidelines relating to food safety and hygiene, nutrition, labelling, and import/export inspection and certification and quality of food stuff. This will require sustained commitment and effort in the following key directions:
 - The CAC will develop international standards, guidelines, and recommendations based on scientific principles for the reduction of health risks along the entire food chain, including feed when appropriate. In strengthening the strategic focus of the CAC in the development of risk-based, performance-based standards and related texts for broad application across a range of commodities, the CAC must give priority to establishing a coherent and integrated set of food standards covering the entire food chain. Such an approach can serve as a model for the members of the CAC to pursue food regulatory systems that provide consumers with safe food and ensure fair practices in the food trade;

- Codex standards and related texts for food safety and quality, including labelling aspects, should be carefully prepared to reflect global variations. Codex standards for food quality should focus on essential characteristics of products to ensure that they are not overly prescriptive and that the standards are not more trade restrictive than necessary; and
 - The CAC, when elaborating and deciding upon Codex standards and related texts should take into consideration the technical and economic implications for all members as well as the special needs of developing countries including infrastructure, resources and technical and legal capabilities, Codex standards and related texts should not have the effect of creating unnecessary, unjustified or discriminatory obstacles to the exports of developing countries.
7. In many countries, effective food control is undermined by the existence of fragmented legislation, multiple jurisdictions and weaknesses in surveillance, monitoring and enforcement. Sound national food control and regulatory systems are essential to ensuring the health and safety of the domestic population as well as ensuring the safety and quality of foods entering international trade. The FAO and WHO have made significant advances in promoting sound regulatory frameworks at the national level. The Commission, while encouraging members to use relevant Codex ~~relevant~~ standards, strongly encourages FAO and WHO to continue to promote national regulatory systems that are based on international principles and guidelines and address all components of the food chain. The development of sound food control and regulatory infrastructure including human resources is particularly important for developing countries as they seek to achieve higher levels of food safety and nutrition and will require high-level political and policy commitment.⁴ Successful negotiation of bilateral mutual recognition and equivalence of food control systems also depends on the abilities of countries to assure each other of the integrity and international conformity of their regulatory systems.

GOAL 2: PROMOTING WIDEST AND CONSISTENT APPLICATION OF SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLES AND RISK ANALYSIS

8. The scientific basis of decision-making by the CAC is spelled out in the Statements of Principle on the Role of Science in the Codex Decision-Making process and the Extent to Which Other Factors are Taken into Account and in the Working Principles for Risk Analysis for Application in the Framework of the Codex Alimentarius⁵. The CAC will ensure their consistent application by relevant Codex subsidiary bodies, in order to maintain its focus on this Goal. Risk analysis as it applies to food safety across the food chain is an internationally accepted discipline and will require ongoing and sustained inputs from the CAC, its parent organisations and national governments to promote its understanding and application at the international and national levels.
9. In recent years the scope of scientific advice sought by the CAC from the parent organisations increased considerably and went beyond chemical and microbiological hazards. FAO and WHO responded to these requests through several FAO/WHO *ad hoc* consultations on topics such as foods derived from genetically modified organisms and antimicrobial resistance. The Commission requests FAO and WHO to continue to promote the understanding of risk analysis and to continue to explore new areas of work, such as nutritional risk assessment, so as to provide the scientific advice relevant to CAC activities for standard setting.
10. The timely availability of scientific advice is a prerequisite for the CAC to fulfil its mandate. The Commission will continue to encourage FAO and WHO to make sufficient resources available to ensure that the scientific advice to the CAC can be provided in a timely and sustainable way. To make more efficient and effective use of the FAO/WHO expert bodies and *ad hoc* consultations, particularly given the rapidly expanding scope of scientific advice requested from FAO and WHO, the CAC will continue to strengthen the interaction between the risk managers (relevant Codex subsidiary bodies) and the risk assessors (FAO/WHO expert bodies and *ad hoc* expert consultations). The Commission has agreed to recommend to FAO and WHO a set of criteria for the prioritization of requests from the

⁴ Report of the Conference on International Food Trade beyond 2000: Science based Decisions, Harmonization, Equivalence and Mutual Recognition, Melbourne, Australia, 11-15 October, 1999, Appendix 1.

⁵ Codex Alimentarius Procedural Manual.

CAC for scientific advice and will review the usefulness of this approach. The CAC, in close cooperation with its parent organizations, will enhance its capacity to respond efficiently to emerging food borne risks by strengthening its work management capabilities (see Goal 3).

11. The CAC has the goal of elaborating standards that cover the needs of its entire membership to ensure these standards are applicable globally. A constraint to this goal is the persistent lack of relevant data from all major parts of the world. The CAC will continue to encourage countries from both the developed and developing worlds to submit relevant data to the CAC and the parent organizations. The Commission recommends that FAO and WHO build on the achievements already accomplished⁶ and take meaningful steps to ensure that scientific advice is provided more quickly, with even higher quality, that more requests are addressed, and that the process is conducted with enhanced transparency. The Commission particularly encourages FAO and WHO to explore new approaches to enhance participation of experts and the use of data from developing countries in the elaboration of scientific advice. Where relevant data are not available from developing countries, the CAC encourages FAO and WHO to assist the developing countries in generating such data.

GOAL 3: STRENGTHENING CODEX WORK-MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES

12. Attention to food safety and global food trade has continued to increase among countries and among the international governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with these matters. More expeditious and efficient work by the CAC is necessary to provide members and international organizations with the standards, guidelines, and recommendations that they need.
13. The CAC has already made several important advances towards achieving more efficient work-management procedures, such as strengthening the role of the Executive Committee as a strategic and standards-management body, holding annual Commission sessions, and instituting more effective use of information technology. But the CAC must take additional steps to keep pace with international developments by better managing its work so that it addresses high priority issues in a timely manner and that standards development work is completed within specified time frames.
14. The implementation of new Codex work-management procedures⁷ must make the CAC more effective and efficient, while maintaining the valuable reputation that the CAC has earned as an open, fair, transparent, and rules-based body. Key features of continuing enhancements include⁸:
 - Enhancing the capabilities of the Executive Committee with respect to strategic oversight, direction, and cross coordination of the work programmes of all subsidiary bodies through recommendations to the Commission;
 - Ensuring that the Commission and its subsidiary bodies make decisions about work prioritization using criteria that enable effective decision making, taking into consideration the need to initiate new work and to revise existing standards;
 - Ensuring that new work and standard-revision work is completed within defined time frames. Work progress is monitored by the Executive Committee, and in the event that work exceeds specified time frames, the Executive Committee recommends to the Commission that corrective actions be taken as necessary;
 - Exploring mechanisms for progressing the work of subsidiary bodies in between sessions, while maintaining transparency and inclusiveness;
 - Promoting consensus-based decision-making; and
 - Strengthening the Secretariat of the CAC to ensure effective operation and work management of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies and to maintain effective communication with the Codex Contact Points.

⁶ FAO/WHO Consultative Process for the Provision of Scientific Advice to Codex and Member Countries.

⁷ As suggested by both the Report of the Evaluation of the Codex Alimentarius and Other FAO and WHO Food Standards Work and the Report on the Review of Codex Committee Structure and Mandates of Codex Committees and Task Forces and as endorsed by the Commission.

⁸ Key features are not listed in priority order.

GOAL 4: PROMOTING COOPERATION BETWEEN CODEX AND RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

15. The CAC must work closely on matters of common interest with other relevant international organizations, including those whose work has indirect but significant implications for food-standard issues. Monitoring by the CAC of activities of other organizations that are relevant to food standards, and coordination with them, where appropriate and consistent with Codex procedures, is necessary to achieve complementarity, avoid duplication and prevent development of contradictory standards or guidelines. Such collaboration is also critical to the development of health-protection and food-trade measures that address the food chain from farm to table in a coherent and seamless manner.
16. The WTO recognizes the CAC as the pre-eminent international body for establishing food safety standards. The Commission must, therefore, play a leadership role in establishing international food standards for protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in food trade, while taking due account of international regulatory initiatives of international governmental and non-governmental organizations. The CAC also has a responsibility to provide its technical input and expertise towards the building of international consensus on food standards and regulatory policy matters. Establishment or promotion of cooperation, between the CAC and other relevant international intergovernmental organizations, in particular, OIE and IPPC, should be considered, where appropriate, to ensure effective collaboration and coordination, and that such cooperation should be in line with the Guidelines on Cooperation between Codex Alimentarius Commission and International Intergovernmental Organizations in the Elaboration of Standards and Related Texts.

GOAL 5: PROMOTING MAXIMUM AND EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF MEMBERS

17. Full participation by all Codex Members and other interested parties in the work of the CAC is now more important than ever. The participation of all members and relevant intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations is critical to sound decision-making and ensuring that Codex standards and related texts take account of the full range of interests and viewpoints. Since the early 1990s there has been a significant increase in the membership of the CAC with developing countries now constituting a significant proportion of total membership. The Commission welcomes some initiatives undertaken so far to mitigate the financial and human resource constraints hitherto hampering the effective participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the activities of the CAC. Such initiatives include the establishment of the Joint FAO/WHO Project and Trust Fund for Enhanced Participation in Codex, and the development of training manuals and other Codex related capacity building tools. Capacity building programmes under FAO and WHO also have a bearing on strengthening these countries' participation in Codex activities. The Trust Fund and other FAO and WHO programmes are efforts aimed at enabling the members to further gain experience in the Codex process. The Commission strongly urges beneficiary members to take these opportunities offered and create sustainability towards more effective participation, by making firm commitments to adequate allocation of national resources towards Codex work.
18. There is a continuing need for FAO and WHO to implement capacity building programmes in a coherent manner, especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition, aimed at strengthening national administrative and consultative structures on Codex (e.g. Codex Contact Point, National Codex Committee) and enhancing technical expertise required for effective participation in international standards development. The CAC will play an advisory role in facilitating the efforts made by FAO and WHO so that those efforts address the needs of the CAC and its members.
19. In addition to actions to promote participation of member countries, the CAC will continue to enhance inclusiveness and transparency of the Codex process by furthering its efforts to encourage the participation of consumers and public interest groups in its processes at the international level and encourage governments to take action at the national level. The CAC will take advantage of any information technological developments for advancement of inclusiveness and transparency in the Codex process.

PART 2

PROGRAMME AREAS AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES 2008-2013

Goal 1: Promoting Sound Regulatory Framework**1.1 : Review and develop Codex standards and related texts for food safety**

Description: Review and develop Codex standards and related texts for food safety, taking into account scientific and technological developments, to ensure that they: emphasize a horizontal approach; employ a risk-based approach to food safety that addresses the entire food chain; and reflect global variations so as to avoid being more trade restrictive than necessary, while respecting the basic objectives of the CAC, taking into consideration the technical and economic implications for all members as well as the special needs of developing countries including infrastructure, resources and technical and legal capabilities.

Timeline : Continuing

Responsible parties: CCFH, CCFA, CCCF, CCPR, CCRVDF, CCNFSDU, relevant Task Forces and Commodity Committees

1.2 : Review and develop Codex standards and related texts for food quality

Description: Review and develop Codex standards and related texts for food quality, taking into account scientific and technological developments, to ensure that they are generic in nature and whilst maintaining inclusiveness, reflect global variations and focus on essential characteristics so as to avoid being overly prescriptive and not more trade restrictive than necessary, while respecting the basic objectives of the CAC, taking into consideration the technical and economic implications for all members as well as the special needs of developing countries including infrastructure, resources and technical and legal capabilities.

Timeline : Continuing

Responsible parties: Relevant Task Forces, Commodity Committees and FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees

1.3 : Review and develop Codex standards and related texts for food labelling and nutrition

Description: Review and develop Codex standards and related texts for food labelling and nutrition, taking into account scientific and technological developments and the WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, to ensure that they: emphasize a horizontal approach and the need to maintain inclusiveness, and address food labelling and nutrition so as to avoid being overly prescriptive and not more trade restrictive than necessary, while respecting the basic objectives of the CAC, taking into consideration the technical and economic implications for all members as well as the special needs of developing countries including infrastructure, resources and technical and legal capabilities.

Timeline: Continuing

Responsible parties: CCFL, CCNFSDU

1.4 : Review and develop Codex standards and related texts for food inspection and certification, and methods of sampling and analysis

Description: Review and develop Codex standards and related texts for food inspection and certification as well as methods of sampling, including guidance on equivalence, mutual recognition and traceability / product tracing, taking into account scientific and technological developments, to ensure that they: emphasize a horizontal approach and the need to maintain inclusiveness, and reflect global variations so as to avoid being overly prescriptive and not more trade restrictive than necessary, while respecting the basic objectives of the CAC, taking into consideration the technical and economic implications for all members as well as the special needs of developing countries including infrastructure, resources and technical and legal capabilities.

Timeline: Continuing

Responsible parties: CCMAS, CCFICS

1.5 : Develop guidance for safe and prudent non-human antimicrobial usage for containment of resistance
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Description: Develop guidance within the remit of the Codex mandate for safe and prudent antimicrobial usage for containment of resistance in food production which focuses on public health, is based on sound science and follows risk analysis principles, and takes into account the work of other international organisations.
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Timeline: Completion by 2011

Responsible parties: Existing relevant Codex Committees, <i>ad hoc</i> Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance
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1.6 : Explore innovative risk management frameworks
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Description: Explore innovative risk management frameworks in establishing MRLs of veterinary drugs and pesticides and share the results of new approaches among Codex Committees.

Timeline: Completion by 2009

Responsible parties: CCRVDF, CCPR
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1.7 : Encourage FAO/WHO to expand capacity building programmes

Description: Encourage FAO/WHO to strengthen their programmes to enhance food control infrastructures and to provide technical assistance including assistance on generating data to countries in need to promote application or use of Codex standards and related texts at the national <u>and regional</u> level. Request FAO/WHO to report to the Commission on the implementation status of their capacity building activities.

Timeline: Continuing

Responsible parties: CAC, CCEXEC and <u>FAO/WHO</u> Coordinating Committees
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1.8 : Publish and disseminate the Codex Alimentarius

Description: Ensure timely publication and availability of Codex standards, guidelines and recommendations to all interested parties through the Internet and other appropriate means.

Timeline: Continuing

Responsible parties: Codex Secretariat, Codex Contact Points

**Goal 2: Promoting Widest and Consistent Application of Scientific Principles
and Risk Analysis**

2.1 Review the consistency of risk analysis principles elaborated by the relevant Codex Committees

Description: Review the risk analysis principles elaborated by the relevant Codex Committees for consistency with the Working Principles for Risk Analysis for Application in the Framework of the Codex Alimentarius. The review might result in the CAC advising Codex Committees to amend their risk analysis principles document relevant to their area of work.

Timeline: Completion by 2011.

Responsible parties: CCGP

2.2 Review risk analysis principles developed by relevant Codex Committees

Description: Review risk analysis principles developed by relevant Codex Committees in the light of the experience gained assuming when ng that by 2008 all relevant Codex Committees have elaborated risk assessment policies pertaining to their area of work, and that these policies having e been adopted by the CAC.

As these risk assessment policies play a pivotal role in the interaction between risk managers and risk assessors, communication between these two parties should be further improved, where appropriate. The result of such a review may be revised documents on risk analysis principles for adoption by the Commission. The review should also take into account the outcome of the activities described under 2.1 and 2.3.

Timeline: Completion by 2013
Responsible parties: CAC, CCEXEC, CCFA, CCCF, CCPR, CCRVDF, CCFH, CCNFSDU

2.3 Enhance communication among relevant Codex subsidiary bodies and the FAO/WHO scientific expert bodies

Description: Enhance communication between the risk managers and risk assessors in accordance with paragraph 38 of the Working Principle for Risk Analysis for Application in the Framework of the Codex Alimentarius.

Timeline: Ongoing

Responsible parties: CCFA, CCCF, CCPR, CCRVDF, CCFH, CCNFSDU

2.4 Review the set of criteria recommended to FAO and WHO for prioritization of requests from Codex for scientific advice.

Description: Review the usefulness of the criteria agreed upon by the 28th Session of the CAC for use by FAO/WHO to prioritize requests from Codex for scientific advice.

Timeline: Completion by 2009.

Responsible parties: CCEXEC

2.5 Encourage countries to channel their requests for scientific advice to FAO / WHO through the CAC

Description: Encourage countries to channel their requests through the CAC in order to make the best use of the limited resources available at FAO and WHO for the provision of scientific advice. Encourage FAO and WHO to inform the CCEXEC and the CAC of all requests on provision of scientific advice on food safety received from member countries.

Timeline: Continuing

Responsible parties: CAC, CCEXEC, all subsidiary bodies

2.6 Elaborate working principles/guidelines for risk analysis for food safety for application by governments.

Description: Complete the elaboration of working principles/a guideline for risk analysis for food safety for application by to be used by governments.

Timeline: Subject to decision by CAC in 2007

Responsible parties: CCGP

Goal 3: Strengthening Codex Work-Management Capabilities

3.1 Review the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities and procedures of the critical review carried out by the CCEXEC

Description: Review and revise, if necessary, the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities and the effectiveness of the critical review process.

Timeline: Completion of analysis by CCEXEC by 2009; if there is need for revision, completion of revision by CCGP by 2011

Responsible parties: CCEXEC, CCGP

3.2 Ensure effective standards management

Description: Annually review progress of all subsidiary-body activities (i.e., standards, codes of practice, codes of hygienic practice, guidelines) against specified timeframes for completion of each activity, and recommend corrective actions to the Commission for activities that appear likely to exceed or have exceeded specified timeframes.

Timeline: Continuing

Responsible parties: CCEXEC

3.3 Develop committee-specific decision making and priority setting criteria
Description: Develop committee-specific decision-making and priority-setting criteria and use these criteria for management of work. Implement and review criteria where necessary.
Timeline: Completion of decision making and priority setting criteria by 2008. Review of criteria, beginning in 2008.
Responsible parties: All General Subject Committees and some other subsidiary bodies as appropriate
3.4 Analyse work-management approaches that facilitate advancement of texts in the Codex step process.
Description: Analyse work-management approaches used by committees that facilitate advancement of texts in the Codex step procedure in the light of the criteria referred to in 3.3 and their use by these committees.
Timeline: Completion of analysis by 2009
Responsible parties: Analysis work to be done possibly either by Codex Secretariat or by consultant for next step (3.5)
3.5 Adopt approaches proven to facilitate advancement of texts in the Codex step procedure by subsidiary bodies not currently using such approaches.
Description: Recommend adoption of approaches proven to facilitate advancement of texts in the Codex step procedure by subsidiary bodies not currently using such approaches, in the light of the analysis undertaken as per 3.4.
Timeline: Completion by 2011
Responsible parties: CCEXEC and CAC
3.6 Implement priority-ranked comprehensive accounting of all requests for scientific advice
Description: Request FAO and WHO annually to produce a priority-ranked comprehensive accounting (including budget information as it has impacts on Codex work) of all requests for scientific advice (i.e. continuing, ad hoc, requested by subsidiary bodies, or requested by members). The criteria that shall be used for priority ranking are those agreed to at the 55 th Session of the Executive Committee (ALINORM 05/28/3). FAO and WHO are also requested to include budget information relevant to provision of scientific advice.
Timeline: Continuing
Responsible parties: CCEXEC
3.7 Evaluate the capacity of the Codex Secretariat to perform its function effectively
Description: Evaluate the effectiveness and resource needs of the Codex Secretariat in the operation and work management of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, and in communicating with and serving the needs of Codex Contact Points.
Timeline: Completion by 2009
Responsible parties: Codex Secretariat, CCEXEC, CAC
3.8 Streamline Codex Commodity work
Description: Implement the decisions of the Commission on how to streamline Codex work on commodities through an improved structure of Codex subsidiary bodies.
Timeline: Completion by 2010
Responsible parties: CCEXEC, CAC

Goal 4: Promoting Cooperation between Codex and other relevant international organizations

4.1 Track the activities of other international standard-setting bodies
Description: Track the activities of other international standard-setting bodies to identify areas of potential complementarities, gaps, duplication, or conflict. A summary of such activities relevant to Codex shall be reported to the Executive Committee and to the Commission annually.
Timeline: Continuing
Responsible parties: CAC, CCEXEC, Codex Secretariat, subsidiary bodies

4.2 Encourage Codex contributions to the work of other international bodies
Description: Encourage other relevant international bodies, when elaborating food standards and related texts, to take due account of Codex standards, related texts and any relevant ongoing work. Where appropriate, propose inclusion of appropriate cross-reference to Codex standards and relevant texts.
Timeline: Continuing
Responsible parties: Codex Secretariat

4.3 Encourage contributions from other international bodies in Codex work
Description: Invite international bodies concerned with food safety and food quality to participate in the standards development process of Codex
Timeline: Ongoing
Responsible parties: Observers, Codex Secretariat

4.4 Consider cooperation with other relevant international intergovernmental organizations
Description: While recognizing the needs to further improve interaction with OIE and IPPC, where appropriate, explore possibilities for cooperation to ensure effective collaboration and coordination, and that such cooperation should be in line with the Guidelines on Cooperation between Codex and International Intergovernmental Organizations.
Timeline: Continuing
Responsible parties: Legal Counsels of FAO and WHO, Codex Secretariat

4.5 Promote interdisciplinary coordination at the national and regional level
Description: Encourage Codex member countries to establish effective mechanisms within their own countries so that horizontal coordination and communication occurs among national delegates to various food-standards-related international organizations. Invite members to develop evaluation criteria to assess the success of the mechanisms that they have established and report progress in this activity through their respective Codex Regional Coordinating Committees to the CAC.
Timeline: Completion by 2009
Responsible parties: Codex Members, <u>FAO/WHO</u> Coordinating Committees

Goal 5: Promoting Maximum and Effective Participation of Members

5.1 Promote Enhanced Participation of developing countries in Codex
Description: Request FAO/WHO to encourage current donors to continue to provide funds to the FAO/WHO Trust Fund and invite other donors to contribute to the Fund to ensure sustainability. Request FAO/WHO to analyse the impact of the Codex Trust Fund on the capacity of beneficiary countries and report its findings to the CCEXEC and the Commission. Provide recommendations to FAO / WHO with a view to improved operation of the Trust Fund based on the outcome of the Trust Fund mid-term evaluation.
Timeline: Continuing
Responsible parties: CAC , Executive Committee,

5.2 Promote effective use of written comments in the Codex process

Description: Encourage members and observers to make maximum use of opportunities to submit written comments in response to Circular Letters (CLs) while respecting the deadlines for such submissions to allow all members and observers to study the positions of other members and observers in a timely manner.

Codex Secretariat and Chairs of the Committees will examine how best to ensure that written comments of members that are not present at the meetings are taken into consideration, and how to handle the late submission of comments ~~how best to handle the late submission of comments in~~ response to CLs, from the view points of transparency and inclusiveness.

Timeline: Continuing

Responsible parties: Codex Members, Observers, CCEXEC, Codex Secretariat

5.3 Evaluate effectiveness of Codex Committee sessions held in developing countries

Description: Evaluate the effectiveness of holding Codex sessions in developing countries in terms of enhanced participation. Analyse the effectiveness of co-hosting arrangements, and continue to explore possibilities of convening Codex sessions outside the host countries.

Timeline: Completion by 2009

Responsible parties: Host countries, CCEXEC

5.4 Strengthen Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees

Description: Request FAO and WHO to provide technical assistance for the strengthening of national Codex structures; provide improved support by the Codex Secretariat to Codex Contact Points through the effective use of Internet facilities.

Timeline: Continuing

Responsible parties: CAC, CCEXEC, Codex Secretariat

5.5 Enhance participation of non-governmental organizations at international, regional and national levels

Description: Encourage non-governmental organizations to participate in Codex work at national, regional and international levels. Encourage members to establish sound structures and processes for consultation on Codex matters to ensure effective involvement and participation of all interested parties.

Timeline: Continuing

Responsible parties: CAC, Codex Members, subsidiary bodies

5.6 Enhance communication about Codex work at international and national levels

Description: Develop new communication approaches to promote the work of Codex at national and international levels. Develop direct and easily understandable messages on Codex to interested parties including consumers and especially emphasizing high level policy makers. .

Timeline: Continuing

Responsible parties: Codex Secretariat, WHO and FAO, Codex Contact Points, subsidiary bodies

PART 3

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN

This Part contains two tables:

- Table 1: Implementation of Strategic Plan
(This table is a checklist of the Strategic Plan activities to monitor the progress and achievement of the activities listed in Part 2. This table will be regularly updated for review by the Executive Committee.)
- Table 2: Critical Review of Proposals for New Work and Monitoring Progress of Standards Development
(This table is a checklist of ongoing work, to manage current and future work undertaken by the subsidiary bodies of the Commission. This Part will regularly be presented for critical review by the Executive Committee (to monitor the progress of the ongoing work of standards setting mentioned in 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 of Part 2.)

Table 1: Implementation of Strategic Plan

Goal	Activities	Responsible parties	Timeframe	Output/Measurable indicators	Current Status	Notes *	Advice by EXEC	Decision by CAC
<u>GOAL 1:</u> <u>PROMOTING</u> <u>SOUND</u> <u>REGULATOR</u> <u>Y</u> <u>FRAMEWOR</u> <u>K</u>	1.1 Review and develop Codex standards and related texts for food safety	CCFH, CCFA, CCFE, CCPR, CCRVDF, CCNFSDU, relevant Task Forces and Commodity Committees	Continuing	Standards related texts adopted at respective steps	See Table 2			
	1.2 Review and develop Codex standards and related texts for food quality	Relevant Task Forces, <u>Commodity Committees and FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees and all Commodity Committees</u>	Continuing	Standards and related texts adopted at respective steps	See Table 2			
	1.3 Review and develop Codex standards and related texts for	CCFL, CCNFSDU	Continuing	Standards and related texts adopted at respective steps	See Table 2			

	food labelling and nutrition							
	1.4 Review and develop Codex standards and related texts for food inspection and certification, and methods of sampling and analysis	CCMAS, CCFICS	Continuing	Standards and related texts adopted at respective steps	See Table 2			
	1.5 Develop guidance for safe and prudent non-human antimicrobial usage for containment of resistance	Existing relevant Codex Committees, or an <i>ad hoc</i> Intergovernmental Task Force on <u>Antimicrobial Resistance</u> (Final decision by the 29 th Session of the Commission)	Completion by 2011	Guidance for safe and prudent non-human antimicrobial usage for containment of resistance	See Table 2			
	1.6 Explore innovative risk management frameworks	CCRVDF, CCPR	Completion by 2009	Reports by CCRVDF and CCPR respectively to CCEXEC and CAC				
	1.7 Encourage FAO/WHO to expand capacity building programmes	CAC, CCEXEC and <u>FAO/WHO</u> Coordinating Committees	Continuing	Report from FAO/WHO to CAC, CCEXEC and Coordinating Committees				
	1.8 Publish and disseminate the Codex Alimentarius	Codex Secretariat, Codex Contact Points	Continuing	Publication and dissemination of Codex Alimentarius				

* (Notes from Committees, Secretariat, whichever necessary)

Goal	Activities	Responsible parties	Timeframe	Output/Measurable indicators	Current Status	Notes *	Advice by EXEC	Decision by CAC
<u>GOAL 2:</u> <u>PROMOTING</u> <u>WIDEST AND</u> <u>CONSISTENT</u> <u>APPLICATION</u> <u>OF SCIENTIFIC</u> <u>PRINCIPLES</u> <u>AND RISK</u> <u>ANALYSIS</u>	2.1 Review the consistency of risk analysis principles elaborated by the relevant Codex Committees	CCGP	Completion by 2011	Report by CCGP of completed review to CAC.	See Table 2			
	2.2 Review risk analysis principles developed by relevant Codex Committees	CAC, CCEXEC, CCFA_CCCF, CCPR, CCRVDF, CCFH, CCNFSDU	Completion by 2013	Report by relevant Committees of completed review, taking into account the review of the activities in 2.1 and 2.3.	See Table 2			
	2.3 Enhance communication among relevant Codex subsidiary bodies and the FAO/WHO scientific expert bodies	CCFA_CCCF, CCPR, CCRVDF, CCFH, CCNFSDU	Ongoing	Incorporated into report as required in 2.2.				
	2.4 Review the set of criteria recommended to FAO and WHO for prioritization of requests from Codex for scientific advice.	CCEXEC	Completion by 2009	Report of review with recommendation to better match of priorities and resources by CCEXEC to CAC				

	2.5 Encourage countries to channel their requests for scientific advice to FAO / WHO through the CAC	CAC, CCEXEC, all subsidiary bodies	Continuing	Reports by FAO and WHO of requests for scientific advice received directly from countries vs. requests received through CAC.				
	2.6 Elaborate <u>working principles guidelines for risk analysis for food safety for application by governments.</u>	CCGP	Subject to decision by CAC in 2007	<u>Working Principles Guideline for risk analysis for food safety for application by governments</u>	See Table 2			

* (Notes from Committees, Secretariat, whichever necessary)

Goal	Activities	Responsible parties	Timeframe	Output/Measurable indicators	Current Status	Notes *	Advice by EXEC	Decision by CAC
<u>GOAL 3:</u> <u>STRENGTHENING</u> <u>CODEX WORK-</u> <u>MANAGEMENT</u> <u>CAPABILITIES</u>	3.1 Review the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities and procedures of the critical review carried out by the CCEXEC	CCEXEC, CCGP	Completion by 2009 Completion by 2011	Report by CCEXEC on analysis of the critical review process If there is need for revision, revise the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities by CCGP				
	3.2 Ensure effective standards management	CCEXEC	Continuing	Report on compliance of standards development against timelines (associated with critical review process)	See Table 2			
	3.3 Develop committee-specific decision making and priority setting criteria	All General Subject Committees and some other subsidiary bodies as appropriate	Completion by 2008 Continuing	Committee-specific decision-making and priority-setting criteria Confirmed review of criteria beginning in 2008				
	3.4 Analyse work-management approaches that facilitate advancement of texts in the Codex step process	Either by Codex Secretariat or by consultant for next step (3.5)	Completion by 2009	Report to the CCEXEC and CAC on analysis of work-management approaches				

	3.5 Adopt approaches proven to facilitate advancement of texts in the Codex step procedure by subsidiary bodies not currently using such approaches	CCEXEC and CAC	Completion by 2011	Adoption by CAC on work - management approaches.				
	3.6 Implement priority-ranked comprehensive accounting of all requests for scientific advice	FAO and WHO	Continuing	Comprehensive report by FAO/WHO to CAC on accounting of all requests for scientific advice				
	3.7 Evaluate the capacity of the Codex Secretariat to perform its function effectively	Codex Secretariat, CCEXEC, CAC	Completion by 2009	Report by Secretariat to CAC on the staff and other key resources				
	3.8 Streamline Codex Commodity work	CCEXEC, CAC	Completion by 2010	Accomplished Implementation of the decisions of the Commission on how to streamline Codex work on commodities through an improved structure of Codex subsidiary bodies				

* (Notes from Committees, Secretariat, whichever necessary)

Goal	Activities	Responsible parties	Timeframe	Output/Measurable indicators	Current Status	Notes *	Advice by EXEC	Decision by CAC
<u>GOAL 4:</u> <u>PROMOTING</u> <u>COOPERATION</u> <u>BETWEEN</u> <u>CODEX AND</u> <u>OTHER</u> <u>RELEVANT</u> <u>INTERNATIONAL</u> <u>ORGANIZATIONS</u>	4.1 Track the activities of other international standard-setting bodies	CAC, CCEXEC, Codex Secretariat, subsidiary bodies	Continuing	Report to the CCEXEC and CAC indicating potential complementarities, gaps, duplication, or conflict with the work of other international organizations				
	4.2 Encourage Codex contributions to the work of other international bodies	Codex Secretariat	Continuing	Number of standards elaborated by other international organisations with a cross reference to Codex standards and relevant texts				
	4.3 Encourage contributions from other international bodies in Codex work	Observers, Codex Secretariat	Continuing	Number of Codex standards elaborated with identifiable input from other international organisations				
	4.4 Consider cooperation with other relevant international intergovernmental organizations	Legal Counsels of FAO and WHO, Codex Secretariat	Continuing	Devise the means by which Codex can strengthen cooperation with OIE and IPPC				

	4.5 Promote interdisciplinary coordination at the national and regional level	Codex Members, <u>FAO/WHO</u> Coordinating Committees	Completion by 2009	Reports from members to Regional Coordinating Committees on mechanisms and evaluation criteria.				
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* (Notes from Committees, Secretariat, whichever necessary)

Goal	Activities	Responsible parties	Timeframe	Output/Measurable indicators	Current Status	Notes *	Advice by EXEC	Decision by CAC
<u>GOAL 5:</u> <u>PROMOTING</u> <u>MAXIMUM AND</u> <u>EFFECTIVE</u> <u>PARTICIPATION</u> <u>OF MEMBERS</u>	5.1 Promote enhanced participation of developing countries in Codex	CAC, CCEXEC	Continuing	Reports from FAO / WHO presenting analysis of measures of enhanced participation achieved through the Codex Trust Fund.				
	5.2 Promote effective use of written comments in the Codex process	Codex Members, Observers, CCEXEC, Codex Secretariat	Continuing	Reports by host countries on patterns of submission of written comments in response to CLs, <u>and adherence by chairs to the guidelines for the conduct of the meetings.</u>				
	5.3 Evaluate effectiveness of Codex Committee sessions held in developing countries	Host countries, CCEXEC	Completion by 2009	Reports from host and co-hosting countries documenting experience co-hosting experience.				
	5.4 Strengthen Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees	CAC, CCEXEC, Codex Secretariat	Continuing	Reports from FAO/WHO on countries whose National structure and codex Contact Points have been supported.				

	5.5 Enhance participation of non-governmental organizations at international, regional and national levels	CAC, Codex Members, <u>subsidiary bodies</u>	Continuing	Reports from member countries under relevant agenda items of the Regional Committees, on participations of non-governmental organizations at National level.				
	5.6 Enhance communication about Codex work at international and national levels	Codex Secretariat, WHO and FAO, Codex Contact Points, subsidiary bodies	Continuing	Reports by Secretariat to CAC on increased use of audio / webcasting, enhancement of webpages, increase use of electronic distribution of codex materials, etc.				

* (Notes from Committees, Secretariat, whichever necessary)

Table 2: Critical Review of Proposals for New Work and Monitoring Progress of Standards Development

Sample:

<i>Codex Committee on xx</i> ⁹	Timeframe		Current Status ¹⁰	Relevant Output Codes ¹¹	Provision of scientific advice	Explanatory notes	Specific Comments from the Chairperson of the Committee	Advice given by the Executive Committee
	Document title	Job ID ¹²						
Draft Guidelines for A	N03-2005	2009	6/7	1.2	Not required			
Draft Standard for B	N04-2006	2011	5	1.3	Not required			
Proposed Draft Guidelines for C	N05-2006	2011	3/4	1.2	FAO/WHO Expert Consultation planned in 2009			
Proposed Draft Standard for D	N04-2008	2013	2	1.3	FAO/WHO Expert Consultation requested by 2011			
General comments by the Chairperson / host countries of the Committee:								

⁹ Name of the subsidiary body.

¹⁰ Step in the Elaboration Procedure.

¹¹ Reference made to Part 2 of the Strategic Plan.

¹² Job IDs are assigned by the Commission upon approval as new work.

¹³ Year by which the draft text is to be adopted at Step 8, as agreed by the Commission on the basis of the Project Document.