



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
FAO/WHO REGIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE

29th Session

The Hague, the Netherlands, 30 September – 3 October 2014

CODEX WORK RELEVANT TO THE REGION

(Prepared by the Coordinator)

1. Effective participation does not equal the number of meetings a country attends. Effective participation can be measured in terms of the outcomes of Codex committees (standards and guidelines that are adopted) that meet the needs of a countries particular circumstance. For example; if a country identifies that the work of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene to develop guidelines for the control of nontyphoidal *Salmonella* spp. in beef and pork meat is a priority because they have a high level of frequency of foodborne illness caused by salmonellosis and that the guidelines could contribute to a reduction in the frequency of illness, then they would endeavour to participate in the electronic working groups and if possible attend the meeting.
2. Participation in electronic working groups is a useful way for countries to increase their effective participation in Codex. Currently there are more than 70 electronic working groups active across various Codex subsidiary bodies. It is useful to identify relevant eWGs and participate to increase capacity in those areas.
3. In 2009 the Codex Committee on General Principles during its discussion on the Terms of Reference of Coordinating Committees¹ noted the views of the Coordinating Committees (CCNASWP, CCEURO, CCASIA, CCNEA and CCAFRICA) in that they generally agreed that the current terms of reference should remain unchanged, because the current Terms of Reference were sufficiently broad to allow Coordinating Committees to formulate regional positions among members, where necessary, and that the possibility to carry out this activity was adequately covered by bullet point (g) "exercises a general coordinating role for the Region and such other functions as may be entrusted to it by the Commission".²
4. The CCGP further noted the specific request from the CCLAC to clarify whether the current terms of reference for the Coordinating Committees could be interpreted to give them full freedom to issue regional opinions on all themes under discussion in Codex of strategic importance to the region concerned.
5. The Secretariat clarified that in addition to the present Terms of Reference of Coordinating Committee, bullet (iii) of paragraph 3 of Rule IV of the Rules of Procedure also conferred the Coordinators the function to advise the Executive Committee and the Commission of the view of countries of the respective region.
6. The Committee concluded the discussion by confirming that the full freedom was given under the current Terms of Reference of FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees to issue regional opinions on all themes under discussion in Codex of strategic importance to the region concerned and to promote the adoption of regional positions on strategic subjects, and therefore there was no need to modify the Terms of Reference.

Action for the Committee

7. In view of the decision taken by CCGP, CCEURO might want to consider the benefit of developing regional positions on Codex work that is of interest to the region. The Committee could discuss how to develop regional positions (electronically) on particular items of work that could then be submitted by individual members of the Region as written comments to the electronic working groups or as oral comments during the meeting of a particular committee. Such a mechanism will contribute to the development of their capacity to provide input to the development of international standards.

¹ CX/GP 09/25/6.

² ALINORM 32/33 paragraph 100-103.

8. As an initial step the region could agree to identify priority areas of work within Codex Committees as listed in the Annex. Once the areas have been identified the region would appoint a lead country for each area of work – it would probably be best to start with only 3 or 4 items. The region would then setup its own electronic working group on each of these items with perhaps one of the more experienced developed countries taking the lead to act as a coordinator/facilitator/mentor for the region on that particular piece of work. Sharing of views on the particular item of work would be done through the region with a view to developing written or oral comments that could be submitted by each interested member of the region.
9. The members of the CCLAC region develop regional positions on key issues through their regional meetings/training workshops or other fora and then each member of the region is able to submit the comments as their individual country comments. This has helped them to present a more coordinated approach to strategic issues but has also developed their capacity to provide balanced robust positions as individual countries at Codex meetings. Members of CCEURO might want to consider if this will also benefit them in submitting effective written and oral comments.

Annex

GENERAL SUBJECT COMMITTEES:

CODEX COMMITTEE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD HYGIENE

CODEX COMMITTEE ON CONTAMINANTS IN FOODS

CODEX COMMITTEE ON RESIDUES OF VETERINARY DRUGS IN FOODS

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD IMPORT AND EXPORT INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION

CODEX COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION AND FOOD FOR SPECIAL DIETARY USES

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD ADDITIVES

CODEX COMMITTEE ON METHODS OF ANALYSIS AND SAMPLING

CODEX COMMITTEE ON PESTICIDE RESIDUES

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING

COMMODITY COMMITTEES:

FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

PROCESSED FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

FATS AND OILS

FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS

MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS

SPICES AND CULINARY HERBS