



## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

### FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NORTH AMERICA AND SOUTH WEST PACIFIC

#### Fifteenth Session

Port Vila, Vanuatu, 16-20 September 2019

*Comments of Papua New Guinea*

#### **AGENDA ITEM 2 CX/NASWP 19/15/2: MANAGING FOOD SAFETY IN AN ERA OF ACCELERATED CLIMATE CHANGE**

Climate change is a reality and it is essential to plan and manage food safety as a result of climatic change. As populations are growing and micro climate is changing, we are pressured to produce adequate food for human consumption and the issue of food and nutrition security becomes a great concern. The CCNASWP region should develop strategies to address food safety from farm to table. The cultivation of safe GM Crops through the use of modern agriculture biotechnology can be adopted to withstand changing environment and adopt climatic challenges. Also, water safety due to rise in sea level by sea water and pollution of drinking sources with sea water can be an issue of concern by PICs as a result of climate change.

##### PNG Position

PNG is of the view that PICs should send young scientist to learn new technologies such as modern agriculture biotechnology to enable cultivation of crops that are climate resilient to withstand climatic conditions such as drought and also the pollution of drinking sources as a result of increase sea level is another issue of concern as it affects consumers human and animal health.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 4 CX/NASWP 19/15/6: USE OF CODEX STANDARDS IN THE REGION**

The survey conducted was very useful tool to determine if relevant Codex Standards are used in the Region especially with respect to Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) in both pesticides on food crops and veterinary drugs in the food producing animals. It is very important to determine and adopt MRL recommendations made by relevant Codex Alimentarius Expert Committees such as Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPPR). PNG is of the view that developing countries such as PICs must conduct field situational analysis to see what types of pesticides and veterinary drugs and growth promoters are used in the country at appropriate levels.

In country regulatory framework has to be reviewed on regular basis to accommodate newly approved MRLs by Codex Alimentarius Commission for pesticides and veterinary drugs residues such as Ractopamine.

##### Papua New Guinea Position

In PNG it is very important to domesticate and adopt Codex Alimentarius international food safety standards and recommendations to be used in the country that is made available by Codex Expert Committees and subject matter specialists of the CAC to protect health of consumers and enhance trade facilitation.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 5 CX/NASWP 19/15/7: MATTERS REFERRED FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES**

Papua New Guinea (PNG) acknowledges Matters referred from CAC and Other Codex Committees. However, PNG is of the view that we work extremely harder to ensure that the two CCNASWP Draft Regional Standards for Kava as a beverage when mixed with Water and Regional Standard for Fermented Noni Juice be endorsed by CAC in 2021.

PNG believes that all six (6) Codex Regions including CCNASWP has played a prominent role in Coordinating Regional Committees and had a tremendous experience and to build up that it would be another great experience to co-host Codex meetings within the respective regions. The PICs can co-host Codex Committees such as CCFICS, CCFH and CCFL to further develop training and capacity building to gain more experience in the work of Codex. PNG believes that this can be achieved in consultation with the Codex Procedural Manual and further discussion at the regional committee for CAC endorsement.

**AGENDA ITEM 6 CX/NASWP 19/15/8: CODEX WORK RELEVANT TO THE REGION**

PNG would support the Agenda Item 6 CX/NASWP 19/15/8 Codex Relevant to the Region in all the issues discussed. However, in the work of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) is a great concern for the region. In PNG with the assistance of FAO and WHO has developed an AMR National Action Plan (NAP) for 2019-2022. In August, last month PNG has organized a National Forum where speeches and presentations were made by FAO, WHO and OIE representatives. The forum was organized under the banner of Global One Health initiative from FAO, WHO and OIE.

In PNG the four organizations including National Department of Health (NDOH), Department of Agriculture & Livestock (DAL), Conservation Environment Protection Authority (CEPA) and National Agriculture Quarantine and Inspection Authority (NAQIA) are working together with FAO and WHO as One Health Approach to deliver AMR issues in the country. Also, the national AMR Committee has planned to launch the plan by the Prime Minister of PNG to obtain prominence and budgetary support before the end of this year to implement its activities. This is one of the important issues for the Region for consideration and hope that CCNASWP Member countries especially the PICs take on board this work on AMR to conduct situation analysis to see if any pesticides and veterinary medicines are developing resistance to humans and food producing animals as well as considering the dosage rates of MRLs used

Another area of concern for PICs including PNG is that we need a capacity building workshop on GM Food Safety Risk Assessment under GM Food Platform initiative of FAO. This will enable public awareness and evaluate the types of GM food imported into our countries and understand the issue of Low Level Presence (LLP) issues in GM Foods and feed to protect health of consumers and facilitate trade. The GM Food Safety Risk Assessment would enable developing countries to have confidence building and trust in the food and feed product that we consume in various PICS member countries.

**AGENDA ITEM 7.1 CX/NASWP/19/15/9: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2019**Introduction

The CAC strategic Plan 2014-2019 was adopted during the 36th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC36) in 2013. Alternatively, CCNASWP Regional Strategic Plan 2014-2019 that was aligned to CAC Strategic Plan was endorsed during the CCNASWP13 Session in Kokopo, East New Britain Province in Papua New Guinea. However, at the CCNASWP14 meeting in Port Vila, Vanuatu, the CCNASWP member countries agreed to discontinue the CCNASWP Strategic Plan to concentrate on the Global Strategic Plan including WHO Food Safety Regional Framework in the Western Pacific Region. The previous Codex Strategic Plan has four (4) goals, 10 objectives, 32 activities and 61 indicators. .

Goal 1 was purposely to discuss and establish international food standards that address current and emerging issues. It is as a result of this goal a lot of emerging issues were identified and appropriate actions were taken to develop and revise existing Codex food standards.

Goal 2 was to ensure the application of risk analysis principles in the development of Codex Standards. As a result of this goal, one of the aims was to strengthen national Codex structures and food control systems.

Goal 3 was to ensure to facilitate the effective participation of all Codex Members.

In 2017 and 2018 only three (3) Small Island Developing States (SIDS) attended physical working meetings from January 2017 to June 2018 (Fiji, PNG and Vanuatu) although under objective 3.1 encourage developing member countries to increase effective participation.

It has been noted that 50% of the members are contributing to online platform created by Codex Secretariat. See document CX/NASWP 19/15/05. This indicates that online platform is the way forward for PICs for effective participation.

Goal 4. Implement effective and efficient management systems and practices. The review was done using EWGs and under Codex Website new Regional Webpage created. See CX/NASWP 19/15/11.

General comments

Member countries and Codex Secretariat, FAO and WHO are responsible for implementation of the Global Strategic Plan. In the CCNASWP region, the PICs can see how they participate and develop strategies to improve the progress in the region from using information on the performance from previous strategic plan. CCNASWP has to devise suitable mechanisms to communicate progress from status report 2014- 2019. The CCNASWP15 has to discuss how PICs can increase in EWGs. Generally, there is low participation from developing countries to Codex meetings including CAC40 (2017) and CAC41 (2018) and subsequently in 2017 & 2018 & 2019 in both CAC and subsidiary bodies.

It has been noted that with exception for Australia, New Zealand, Canada & USA and Micronesia with one (1), other Pacific Island did not participate in EWG discussions. Also, in comparing with the other Regions with CCNASWP only 3% comprising of 5 countries from CCNASWP region which is still considered the lowest. It means that only 5 out of 14 countries participated in EWG. Also, the implementation of the previous strategic plan indicates that there seem to be more attendance in CCFICS meeting than others.

#### Papua New Guinea comments

From the evaluation of previous Codex Strategic Plan 2014-2019 report, the CCNASWP member countries especially the PICs has to devise strategies to improve in the area of effective participation in the work of Codex food safety standards development and review processes to enhance capacity building. PNG believes that if funding is the constraint, we can improve participation in the EWGs and online commenting as a way forward.

### **AGENDA ITEM 7.2 CX/NASWP/19/15/10: CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2020- 2025 – ROAD TO IMPLEMENTATION**

Papua New Guinea appreciates the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 that has been widely discussed by Codex Members countries including the CCNASWP Member countries and that has been adopted by CAC42 Session. The new Codex Strategic plan 2020-2025 has five (5) goals compared to previous on with four goals and it will be addressed by both CAC, Regional Coordinating Codex Committees and Member countries to address food safety standards development issues to protect health of consumers and facilitate trade. However, each Member country in the NASWP Region has to have their own country strategic Plans in place to incorporate and align with the Global Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 to achieve greater outcomes. PNG also appreciate and supports the view to conduct periodic review of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 every two years to accommodate new and emerging food safety standards development and /or reviews of existing standards and at the same time monitor and evaluate the progress in the implementation process.

### **AGENDA ITEM 8 CX/NASWP/19/15/11: CODEX COMMUNICATION WORK PLAN**

The Codex Alimentarius Commission Work Plan is well aligned with Sustainable Development Goals of the UN and Goal 3 of the Draft CAC Strategic Plan 2020- 2025. PNG believes that the Codex Communication Work Plan will drive great awareness in the Codex Members Countries of the region as we present internationally harmonized standards.

PNG believes that with much advocacy initiatives and effective communication at national, regional and international levels regarding work of Codex is very essential. PNG appreciate Draft Codex Communication work Plan which is also the component of the Draft CAC Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

PNG of the view that the World Food Safety Day (07 June) annually can be used as an avenue to raise public awareness of Codex Events and use of Codex Alimentarius International Food Standards.

In terms of language, PNG believes that the CCNASWP region we use appropriate language such as English for communication.

In general, PNG supports the recommendations made by CAC and of the view that the communication focal point has to be housed in the same country of the Regional Coordinator (RC) for convenience and recommend to RC to convenience and recommend that periodic reviews would be of great importance.

### **AGENDA ITEM 9 CX/NASWP/19/15/12: PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL STANDARD FOR FERMENTED NONI JUICE**

#### Introduction

The CCNASWP14 session in Port Vila, Vanuatu agreed to reconvene the EWG led by Tonga to redraft the Proposed Draft Regional Standard for Fermented Noni Juice. During that session the noni growing countries of the CCNASWP Region was tasked to provide data to JECFA to evaluate the safety level of scopoletin to determine toxicity occurrence and composition data.

Also, PNG appreciate the EWG led by Tonga that have done a tremendous work by in sending the Draft Regional Standard for Fermented Noni Juice. PNG thanks those CCNASWP member countries that effectively participated in the discussion process.

PNG believes that those issues such as composition and quality factors that were highlighted by the EWG have to be fully discussed at the meeting. The absence of data on scopoletin is an important issue of concern

while it is on priority list for JECFA evaluation. Thus, the noni producing countries has to provide necessary data to JECFA to conduct evaluation.

#### PNG Position

PNG appreciate the tremendous work done by the EWG and in principle would support its conclusions on the Draft Regional Standard for Fermented Noni Juice as highlighted in Appendix 1. Further, PNG recommends that we propose CAC43 session to adopt the Draft standard at Step 5/8 pending evaluation of scopoletin substance by JECFA while noni growing member countries of the region provide data to JECFA for food safety evaluation as a matter of priority.

### **AGENDA ITEM 10 CX/NASWP/19/15/13: PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL STANDARD FOR KAVA PRODUCT THAT CAN BE USED AS A BEVERAGE WHEN MIXED WITH WATER**

#### Introduction

During the CCNASWP14 held in Port Vila, Vanuatu in 2016, the Proposed Draft Regional Standard for Kava Product that can be used as a Beverage when mixed with water was proposed and subsequently at CAC40 session approved a New Work for the CCNASWP Region. The kava growing members of the region was asked to provide latest data on kava. PNG appreciates to see to see many countries of the region participated in the EWG discussion on proposed kava standard. The EWG led by Vanuatu and assisted by New Zealand and Australia did a tremendous work and participation by many member countries including PNG has propose Draft standard be circulated at Step 3.

The EWG noted that Draft standard species that it can be considered as food and due to the fact that it will considered as food enhance nutritional information and labelling can be fully discussed during CCNASWP15 Session in Port Vila, Vanuatu.

Also, the CCNASWP15 Session has to consider and propose Draft Regional Standard to be considered as 5/8 while issued of concern identified by EWG is addressed.

#### PNG Position

PNG appreciate the efforts of the EWG led by Vanuatu and assisted by New Zealand and Australia. PNG supports the recommendations of the EWG for discussion of issues of concern during the CCNASWP15 Session regarding the Proposed Draft Regional Standard for Kava Product that can be used as a Beverage when mixed with water be considered by CAC at 5/8 while other issues of concern identified by the EWG are resolved amicably.