

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



JOINT OFFICE: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 ROME Tel: 39 06 57051 www.codexalimentarius.net Email: codex@fao.org Facsimile: 39 06 5705 4593

Agenda Item 14

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Twenty-eighth Session

FAO Headquarters, Rome (Italy), 4 – 9 July 2005

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

BACKGROUND

1. In accordance with Rules VIII.4 and VIII.5 of the Rules of Procedure, the Directors-General of FAO or WHO may invite intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations to attend as observers sessions of the Commission and of its subsidiary bodies. Participation of international organizations in the work of the Commission, and the relations between the Commission and such organizations are governed by the relevant provisions of the Constitutions of FAO or WHO, as well as by the applicable regulations of FAO or WHO on relations with international organizations; such relations are handled by the Director-General of FAO or of WHO as appropriate.
2. The amendments to the current Rule VIII.5 have been proposed by the 20th session of the Committee on General Principles and are to be considered by the 28th session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission under Provisional Agenda Item 4.

A. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Guidelines for Cooperation with International Intergovernmental Organizations

3. The 24th Session of the Commission agreed that a document should be developed by the Committee on General Principles to provide guidance on cooperation with other International Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) on the elaboration of Codex Standards and Related Texts.
4. The 21st Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles agreed to forward to the Commission, for adoption, the Draft Guidelines for Cooperation with International Intergovernmental Organizations. These draft guidelines are considered under Provisional Agenda Item 4.

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Relations between Codex and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)

5. The Commission noted at its 26th Session that an OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety had been established in 2002, including experts from Codex, with a mandate to elaborate international standards on microbiological and chemical hazards existing in the animal production chain, to identify gaps and duplication in OIE and Codex texts and to ensure their harmonization and to strengthen the collaboration between the two organizations¹. Since then the OIE Working Group held four meetings, the most recent one being convened in Paris from 21 to 23 March 2005. The Chairperson and the Secretary of the Codex Alimentarius Commission participated in these meetings at the invitation of the OIE. The reports of the meetings are available from the OIE website (http://www.oie.int/eng/secu_sanitaire/en_introduction.htm).

6. The Commission, at its 27th Session, reiterated its interest for increased cooperation with the OIE and suggested that FAO and WHO initiate discussion in accordance with the recommendations of the 53rd Session of the Executive Committee², taking account of the comments made. The Commission requested the Committee on General Principles to finalise the Guidelines at an early opportunity and recommended that the collaboration between Codex and OIE be strengthened also at national and regional level³.

7. The 55th Session of the Executive Committee agreed to recommend to the Commission that:

- OIE be encouraged to continue to participate actively in the standard-setting work of the Commission, namely through the work of relevant subsidiary bodies of the Commission;
- OIE be invited to regularly submit, to relevant Codex subsidiary bodies, reports on its activities relevant to the work of these subsidiary bodies, while these subsidiary bodies continue to seek ways to improve cooperation with OIE in their respective area of work and inform the Executive Committee of their decisions/recommendations accordingly; and
- OIE be invited to submit a summary report to the regular sessions of the Commission on its activities of relevance to the work of the Commission, including the outcome of the OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety.

8. The Executive Committee further recommended that the effectiveness of cooperative arrangements being made between Codex and OIE as above should be reviewed by the 30th Session of the Commission (2007) with a view to considering if further arrangements would be necessary or desirable, including those provisions mentioned in paragraph 13 of the Draft Guidelines.⁴

9. The Commission is **invited** to endorse the recommendations of the Executive Committee as mentioned above.

B. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

10. In accordance with Article 6 of the *Principles Concerning the Participation of International Non-Governmental Organizations in the Work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission*⁵, the Secretary reports to the Codex Alimentarius Commission on the relations between the Codex Alimentarius Commission and international non-governmental organizations established in accordance with the present procedures and provides a list of organizations granted Observer Status, with an indication of the membership that they represent.

¹ ALINORM 03/41, para.191

² ALINORM 04/27/3, paras 100-104

³ ALINORM 04/27/41, para.180

⁴ ALINORM 05/38/3, paras 97 and 98

⁵ Procedural Manual, 14th Edition, FAO/WHO, Rome, 2004.

11. A list of all international non-governmental organizations currently in observer status with the Codex Alimentarius Commission and a list of all applications for observer status considered since the Commission's 27th Session of the Secretariat will be provided to the Commission separately⁶.

12. The 21st Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles agreed to forward to the Commission, for adoption, the amendments to the aforementioned *Principles*. These amendments are considered under Provisional Agenda Item 4.

13. The Commission is invited to note that the Secretariat should review the status of the non-governmental organizations currently in observer status and make appropriate recommendations to the Directors-General, in accordance with the provisions of Section "Review of Observer Status" of the revised *Principles*.

Relations between Codex and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO)

14. The Executive Committee at its 53rd session agreed that the Codex Secretariat establish preliminary contact with the ISO to obtain information on the current status of food safety-related work within the ISO and present its findings to the Executive Committee, together with the implications to the work being undertaken by Codex⁷.

15. The 27th Session of the Commission agreed that the Secretariat should maintain its contacts with ISO and report to the Executive Committee and the Commission on ISO activities of relevance to Codex work.

16. The 55th Session of the Executive Committee was informed that in accordance with the decisions of the Executive Committee and the Commission, contacts for information exchange were maintained between the Codex Secretariat and ISO. The Committee noted that Technical Committee 34 (Food products) of ISO was currently working on three items of relevance to Codex: food irradiation (ISO/AWI 22810), traceability in feed and food chain (ISO/CD 22519), and food safety management systems (ISO/DIS 22000).

17. The Executive Committee noted that the Codex Secretariat had sent written comments to the Secretariat of ISO/TC 34 regarding ISO/CD 22519 and ISO/DIS 22000 in September and November 2004 respectively to draw the attention of ISO/TC 34 to the existing and on-going work of Codex in the areas in question.

18. The Executive Committee was informed that the General Assembly of ISO had adopted in September 2004 the ISO Strategic Plan 2005-2010, of which Objectives 4 and 5 called for increased collaboration between ISO and intergovernmental standard setting bodies such as Codex.

19. The Executive Committee agreed that contacts should be maintained between the Secretariats of Codex and ISO. It was also agreed that in order to minimise duplication of work and to increase consistency of normative guidance between Codex and ISO, national Codex Contact Points should be encouraged to strengthen communication and coordination with the respective national focal point for ISO.⁸

20. An information paper on ISO work, submitted by the ISO Central Secretariat, will be provided to the Commission separately⁹. The information provided by the Secretariat of ISO/TC 34, on selected work items of interest to Codex, is summarised in Table 1 below.

21. The Commission is **invited** to note the information provided, identify those areas where coordination of work between Codex and ISO should be maintained or strengthened and make proposals on practical modalities for implementing such coordination, as appropriate.

⁶ CAC/28 INF/1

⁷ ALINORM 04/27/3, para. 99

⁸ ALINORM 05/28/3 paras 91-94

⁹ CAC/28 INF/2

Table 1. Selected ISO/TC 34 work items of interest to Codex (as of May 2005)

PROJECT NUMBER	TITLE	STATUS
ISO/AWI 22810	Food irradiation – Good processing practices for the irradiation of foods intended to human consumption	To be circulated as a Committee Draft by June 2005
ISO/CD 22519 (ISO 22005)	Traceability in feed and food chain — General principles and guidance for system design and development	ISO/TC 34/WG 9 is redrafting the Committee Draft
ISO/FDIS 22000	Food safety management systems – Requirements for any organization in the food chain	FDIS balloting started on 5 May 2005 (two-month voting period).
ISO/TS 22003	Food safety management systems — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of food safety management systems according to ISO 22000:2005 ¹⁰	Voting for new work item proposal (deadline 1 June 2005)
ISO/TS 22004	Application of ISO 22000 for small and medium-sized enterprises	Under preparation; will be published together with ISO 22000 in September 2005.

¹⁰ It is planned to delete the reference to “ISO 22000:2005” in order to extend its scope to every food safety management system, and to establish a joint working group of ISO/TC 34 and ISO/CASCO.