

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations**



**World Health
Organization**

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CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION**

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**REPORT OF THE 29th SESSION OF THE
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE**

**The Hague, The Netherlands
30 September – 4 October 2014**

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The 29th Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe reached the following conclusions:

Matters for consideration by the 38th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

The Committee:

- agreed on the need for revitalization of RCCs and made comments on several proposals for the revitalisation of RCCs (paras. 20, 25, 28, 29);
- agreed to discontinue work on a Regional Standard for Ayran and to inform the Commission accordingly (para. 37);
- agreed to recommend that the Netherlands be appointed as Coordinator for Europe for a second term (para. 78);
- agreed to request the Commission to consider the possibility to finance translation and interpretation services in Russian in CCEURO (para. 86).

Other matters for information

The Committee:

- noted matters arising from the Codex Alimentarius Commission (para. 5);
- noted FAO and WHO capacity building activities on food quality and safety within the Region including capacity development needs and the successor initiative for the Codex Trust Fund and made a number of comments and recommendations (paras. 12 – 14);
- acknowledged the information submitted by members of the Region on food control systems, consumer participation in food standards setting and use of Codex standards at national level and recognized the challenge of balancing the involvement of consumers and industry in the work of Codex while addressing the question of how best to make the food safety systems work and agreed to continue examining this question in future (para. 34);
- agreed to further elaborate the Strategic Plan for CCEURO for consideration at its next session (para. 66);
- agreed to use the “twinning” approach to carry out capacity building activities to enhance Codex knowledge and participation in Codex work by members of the Region (paras. 68 and 71);
- agreed that CCEURO should aim to facilitate the exchange of views on issues of common interest to the Region with a view to the possible development of shared views while limiting this exercise to key issues on which members of the Region share same or similar views so that members can be better prepared to discuss such issues in the Commission and its subsidiary bodies (para. 76).

INTRODUCTION

1. The FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Europe (CCEURO) held its 29th Session in The Hague, Netherlands, from 30 September to 3 October 2014 at the kind invitation of the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The Session was chaired by Dr. Martijn Weijtens, Ministry of Economic Affairs, and was attended by 46 member countries, 1 Member Organization, 3 observer countries and 4 international observer organizations. The list of participants is presented in Appendix I to this report.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

2. Mr Hans Hoogeveen, Director-General for Agriculture of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, opened the Session on behalf of the Government of the Netherlands. In his speech he underscored the importance of the work of Codex in protecting consumers and strengthening international trade. He welcomed the support of FAO and WHO towards the work of Codex.

Division of Competence¹

3. The Committee noted the division of competence between the European Union and its Member States, according to paragraph 5, Rule II of the Procedure of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda Item 1)²

4. The Committee adopted the Provisional Agenda as its Agenda for the Session and agreed to consider the following issues under Agenda 11 "Other Business":
 - Language regime of CCEURO;
 - Website for Regional Coordinating Committees;
 - Information on the candidature of Norway as Member of CCEXEC for the European Region;
 - Regional workshop on food safety;
 - Report from the Chairperson of the Codex Commission.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES (Agenda Item 2)³

5. The Committee noted matters arising from the 36th and 37th Sessions of the Commission and agreed that matters related to the Codex Strategic Plan would be addressed as necessary under other relevant agenda items.

FAO/WHO ACTIVITIES RELEVANT TO THE REGION, IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS (Agenda Item 3)⁴

FAO Activities relevant to the Region

6. The Committee considered the activities carried out by FAO and WHO in the Region since its 28th Session, as follows:
7. The Representative of FAO highlighted the various capacity building activities that FAO had undertaken over the last two years and emphasized that they addressed three major priority areas namely: (i) enhancing capacities for effective participation in Codex work, (ii) raising capacities to understand and consistently apply the food safety risk analysis framework and (iii) strengthening food safety systems. The Representative pointed out that the capacity building activities included training workshops, technical consultations, public-private dialogue, study visits and field projects.
8. In the area of nutrition, the Representative mentioned that technical support was in a number of areas including: preparing countries for the FAO/WHO Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2); developing a regional food composition database; raising awareness on rye products for diets diversification and cultural heritage preservation; preparing an exchange of best practices in school feeding programs and promotion of reducing malnutrition through agricultural-based interventions. In undertaking its capacity building activities on Codex, FAO collaborated with WHO using the financial support from FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund where applicable.

¹ [CRD1](#): Annotated Agenda for the division of Competence between the European Union and its Member States.

² [CX/EURO 14/29/1](#).

³ [CX/EURO 14/29/2](#).

⁴ [CX/EURO 14/29/3](#); [CX/EURO 14/29/3-Add.1](#); [CRD 4](#) (Some lessons on mentoring/partnering approaches to improve the effective participation of less-experienced countries in the work of Codex).

WHO Activities relevant to the Region

9. The Representative of WHO pointed out that many capacity-building activities in the European Region were undertaken in the areas of nutrition and food safety. In the nutrition area, the focus was on childhood obesity, micro-nutrient deficiencies, and school nutrition. In the area of food safety, work was focused on achieving three major outcomes namely: (i) support the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission to develop standards, including the implementation of food safety standards, guidelines and recommendations, (ii) promoting multi-sectoral collaboration to reduce foodborne public health risks, including those arising at the animal–human interface and (iii) establish adequate national capacity to establish and maintain risk-based regulatory frameworks to prevent, monitor, assess and manage foodborne and zoonotic diseases and hazards
10. The Representative emphasized that many capacity building activities addressed antimicrobial resistance and foodborne disease surveillance and response. Other areas of activities were the strengthening of national food safety systems, strengthening food safety risk communication, and strengthening food safety outbreak and emergency response. In addition, many of the capacity building activities were done in collaboration with FAO, in particular with regard to Codex activities.

FAO/WHO Project and Trust Fund for Enhanced Participation in Codex

11. The Administrator of CTF highlighted that the Codex Trust Fund (CTF) was a joint FAO/WHO project and as such all activities were joint activities of the two organizations. She gave information on the timetable and timelines for the final project evaluation of the Codex Trust Fund, as well as how findings of the evaluation would feed into the development of the successor initiative. The Administrator called attention to CX/EURO 14/29/3-Add.1 containing the preliminary ideas of FAO/WHO, based on information gathered to date from different stakeholder groups. She further outlined the current thinking around a 3-pillared approach that would provide for: 1) tailored support to individual beneficiary countries to meet their specific needs; 2) support to Codex capacity development for groups of countries in regions/sub-regions to address common needs; 3) possible support to continue to address the need to enhance countries scientific/technical input to Codex.

General and specific comments

12. In their interventions, delegations called attention to the following: to focus on the needs of countries/groups of countries in designing capacity development activities; to move into more effective participation in Codex; to look beyond participation in the standards development process to the support that might be needed to tie this to standards implementation in countries; to make sure that results in enhanced participation were captured to ensure transparency and understanding on what was effective and what was not; to maintain a long-term vision of what was needed to continue to enhance participation in Codex.
13. The Committee also noted the importance of the CTF successor initiative in contributing to the achievement of the Codex Strategic Plan, as well as the importance of assisting countries to enhance their capacity to generate, collect and submit scientific data required for the work of Codex.
14. The Committee expressed support for all three pillars being proposed and highlighted the need to continue to ensure synergy and complementarity with FAO/WHO as well as other Codex capacity development efforts. The need for pillar 3 was also emphasized to strengthen the scientific/technical input to Codex.

REVITALIZATION OF FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEES: PROPOSALS ON STRENGTHENING THE ROLE AND PLATFORM OF REGIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEES (RCCs) (Agenda Item 4)⁵

15. The Codex Secretariat introduced the item and noted that the document had been prepared in collaboration with FAO and WHO to stimulate discussion on how RCCs could be revitalized to contribute more effectively to Codex, FAO and WHO strategies on food standards-setting and capacity development on food quality and safety. The Secretariat further noted that at this point, the Committee should focus on principles that would guide the work of RCCs rather than on *how* these principles would be applied, as this was still work in progress however, some ideas were already put forward under proposals 3.1 to 3.4 to prompt further thoughts in RCCs.
16. The Committee focused its discussion on proposals 3.1 to 3.4 as follows:

⁵ [CX/EURO 14/29/4](#); [CRD 2](#) (Codex Strategic Plan 2014-2019); [CRD 3](#) (Draft Template to collect information on official government control for food safety and quality).

Proposal 3.1 – Alignment of RCCs agendas - inclusion of standing items

17. The Committee agreed that the inclusion of common items would allow to collect and analyze information from RCCs in a systematic and comparable way which would be useful for Codex, FAO and WHO in developing their strategies concerning needs for food standards-setting and capacity development on food quality and safety. The Committee therefore agreed with the alignment of RCCs provisional agendas while noting that this would not preclude the inclusion of specific items of interest to the Region when appropriate.
18. The Committee noted that proposals 3.1.1 (Food safety and quality situations in countries of the Region); 3.1.3 (Monitoring of the Codex Strategic Plan); and 3.1.4 (Food standards in the Region) were already standing items on the agenda of RCCs. The Committee further noted that proposal 3.1.2 (Key note address and discussion on regional issue of priority and common challenge) was a novel item for consideration on the agendas of RCCs.
19. The Representative of WHO, on behalf of FAO and WHO, explained that proposal 3.1.2 aimed at discussing a topic of interest to the Region and also use this opportunity to raise awareness on the importance of Codex work outside the Codex community to create political interest and buy-in.
20. The Committee supported proposals 3.1.1 through 3.1.4 as standing items on the agenda of RCCs. The Committee noted that how they would be approached, in particular proposals 3.1.1 and 3.1.4 could be further examined or improved as being discussed in upcoming meetings of RCCs.

Proposal 3.2 – Platform for information sharing on food control systems and roles and responsibilities in food safety

21. The Committee noted that proposals 3.2 and 3.3 were inter-related and in turn linked to proposal 3.1.1.
22. As regards proposal 3.2, the Representative of WHO, on behalf of FAO and WHO, highlighted that, a lot of important information was being reported by national authorities in response to the circular letter, however this information was not analyzed and used in a systematic way. A more flexible and modern on-line system in the form of a database would allow for more sustainable and systematic collection as well as for analysis of the information. Reference was made to CRD 3, which provided a template for the type of information to be collected through such an on-line system, as basis for further discussion. This analysis could then better inform the discussion at RCCs on priorities and needs and guide the overall Codex work, and could also feed into the capacity building programs of FAO and WHO, including the Codex Trust Fund.
23. Delegations recognized the importance of collecting and exchanging information on food legislation and food control systems to identify the needs and define problems concerning food standards-setting and capacity development on food quality and safety; noted that the process for updating of such information should be clear, e.g. as new information became available or with specified deadlines, so that users knew the status of the information at the time of downloading; noted that any system that may be selected should build on experience gained from similar exercises done at regional or country level and information already available; noted that performance of food control systems was useful information but may be a difficult exercise in practice and if measured, it should take into account existing guidelines and principles for food control systems including other relevant ongoing work or work done within the Region (e.g. EU), Codex (e.g. CCFICS⁶), FAO and WHO; and noted that it was important to identify the kind of data / information that was relevant / useful for analysis, assessment, prioritization, benchmarking, etc.
24. The Representative of WHO noted that the details and the mechanisms for sharing and uploading such information should be further discussed, while the focus at this stage was to agree on the principles and the value of this proposal.
25. The Committee supported the replacement of the circular letter with more modern mechanisms, e.g. an on-line platform for information sharing while noting that some of the analysis envisaged, e.g. performance of food control systems, might not be easy to carry out. The new system should build on existing mechanisms; experience gained on similar exercises; information already available; and should make sure to indicate the process of updating, summarizing and reporting of the information. The type of information or data to be collected and analyzed, including benchmarking, prioritization, etc., required further consideration and should build on the questions laid down in the CL.

⁶ Guidelines and Principles for National Food Control Systems ([CAC/GL 82-2013](#)), Background paper and proposal for new work on monitoring control systems (CX/FICS 14/21/4).

Proposal 3.3 – Identification of needs and priorities in regions (persistent and emerging food safety/quality issues)

26. As regards proposal 3.3, the Representative of WHO, on behalf of FAO and WHO, emphasized the importance of identification of priorities including emerging issues, which was also an element of the Codex Strategic Plan. The data collected and analyzed with an on-line database as described under proposal 3.2 could feed into this system, but other mechanisms may also need to be identified.
27. An observer country noted that the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and South West Pacific (CCNASWP) had recommended retaining the CL as a mechanism to identify needs and priorities in regions. A member country noted that identification of needs and priorities for new work in particular emerging food safety issues should address both risk assessment and risk management.
28. The Committee agreed that considerations given under proposal 3.2, in particular paragraph 25, were also pertinent to proposal 3.3.

Proposal 3.4 – Regional Strategic Plan

29. The Committee agreed that regional strategic plans should be consistent with and complementary to the Codex Strategic Plan and when possible have the same time frame as the Codex Strategic Plan.

Follow-up on the conclusions and recommendations of RCCs on revitalization of RCCs

30. The Codex Secretariat informed the Committee that the comments, conclusions and recommendations from the six RCCs in relation to proposals 3.1 to 3.4 including other general comments and recommendations would be analyzed by the Codex Secretariat, FAO and WHO in order to determine further steps in relation to the implementation of these proposals, and would be presented at the next sessions of CCEXEC and CAC.

COMMENTS AND INFORMATION ON NATIONAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEMS, CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN FOOD STANDARDS SETTING AND THE USE OF CODEX STANDARDS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL (REPLIES TO [CL 2014/20-EURO](#)) (Agenda Item 5)⁷

31. The Committee acknowledged the information submitted by member countries in response to the circular letter CL 2014/20-EURO as compiled in documents CX/EURO 14/29/5 and CX/EURO 14/29/5-Add.1. The Committee also noted that due to limited time and the variety of the submissions, it had not been possible to have the information analyzed with a view of having it presented in a manner that would enable members to discuss it effectively. The Committee noted that some of the questions raised in CL 2014/20-EURO concerning strengthening food control systems and Codex structures were already addressed in the challenges for capacity building work identified by FAO and WHO under Agenda Item 3.
32. The Committee noted the presentations from Serbia, Kazakhstan and Norway that built on the questions put forward in CL 2014/20-EURO.
33. Following the presentations, the Representative of WHO noted that food safety was a shared responsibility, however it seemed that there was involvement by industry but less by consumers. The Representative noted that this illustrated the need for outreach and better explanation to consumer what Codex does for them (not just trade but also consumer protection). The Representative further noted that this should be addressed in the Codex Communication Strategy and linked back to proposals under revitalization of RCCs with the keynote and panel discussions, which may increase understanding and engagement, feed into prioritization and identification of emerging issues, which then would lead to better uptake and implementation.

Conclusion

34. The Committee recognized the challenge of balancing between the involvement of consumers and industry in the work of Codex while at same time addressing the question of how best to make the food safety systems work. The Committee agreed to continue examining this question in future.

⁷ [CX/EURO 14/29/5](#) (Replies to [CL 2014/20-EURO](#) of Armenia, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, EU, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovak Republic); [CX/EURO 14/29/5-Add.1](#) (Replies to [CL 2014/20-EURO](#) of Kyrgyzstan, Netherlands and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL STANDARD FOR AYRAN (Agenda Item 6)⁸

35. The Delegation of Turkey, as lead country in the development of the regional Standard for Ayran, provided the Committee with background information on the elaboration of this Standard in CCEURO as follows: Turkey was the worldwide leader in the production and consumption of ayran; ayran was a traditional product in Turkey, and was a fermented milk characterized by the presence of live bacteria; there was no intention to prevent marketing of heat treated fermented milks but they should not be labeled as “ayran” since this would mislead consumers; several meetings had been held to progress work in relation to the inclusion of “heat treated ayran” in the description of the product however no consensus could be reached on the use of heat treatment in the elaboration of ayran.
36. In view of the above, the Delegation requested discontinuation of work on a regional Standard for Ayran.

STATUS OF THE PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL STANDARD FOR AYRAN

37. The Committee agreed to request the Commission to discontinue work on a regional Standard for Ayran.

DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR CCEURO (Agenda Item 7)⁹

38. The Delegation of Netherlands introduced the item and highlighted the key objectives and actions that were addressed in the proposed Strategic Plan for CCEURO.

General discussion

39. The Committee agreed that the Regional Strategic Plan should be consistent with and complementary to the Codex Strategic Plan and its aim should be to stimulate work on capacity development and Codex matters of interest to the Region amongst members of the Region. The Committee noted the need to specify outputs and indicators and to link the objectives to the relevant goals and/or objectives of the Codex Strategic Plan to facilitate monitoring and implementation of both plans. The Committee also noted that the timeframe of the Regional Strategic Plan should be aligned with the Codex Strategic Plan, it was however recognized that the Regional Strategic Plan was at its early stage of development and for practical reasons it might not be possible to catch-up with all the objectives and activities addressed in the Codex Strategic Plan. The Committee further noted that some of the actions identified in the document were already on-going and should continue to develop further.
40. An observer country noted that CCNASWP had decided to retain a regional strategic plan as in their view, the plan was important in helping some countries of the Region to raise the profile of Codex amongst their stakeholders and food safety regulators / policy makers.

Specific discussions

41. The Committee considered each of the draft five objectives, made proposals and reached the following agreements:
42. The Committee agreed that due to the structure of the Regional Strategic Plan and the Codex Strategic Plan it would be more appropriate to link the objectives of the Regional Strategic Plan with the goals of the Codex Strategic Plan.

Objective 1 - To develop and strengthen Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committees

43. The Committee agreed to link Objective 1 to Goal 3 of the Codex Strategic Plan (facilitate effective participation of all Codex members).

Action 1.2 – Conduct national and/or regional workshops on Codex for Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committee members

44. The Committee agreed to insert the word “sub-regional” in addition to “national” and “regional” activities as the Region also contained country groupings belonging to defined sub-regions.

⁸ [CRD 5](#) (Background document and request for discontinuation of work on the development of a regional Standard for Ayran prepared by Turkey).

⁹ [CX/EURO 14/29/6](#).

Action 1.3 – Develop a mentoring program between experienced and less experienced countries to enhance knowledge on Codex issues, structures and processes

45. The Committee agreed to change the words “mentoring” to read “twinning” and “processes” to read “procedures” for consistency with the Codex terminology. The Committee also agreed to change the term “experienced and less experienced countries of the region” to read “CCEURO members” since the point was well taken by the action to enhance knowledge on Codex issues, structures and procedures.
46. The Committee further agreed that CCEURO members also referred to “Member Organization” (i.e. European Union) and agreed to refer to EU as “Member Organization” when appropriate.

Objective 2 - To strengthen communication and coordination amongst CCEURO members, with other regions and the Codex Secretariat

47. The Committee agreed that no further action needed to be taken in relation to strengthening communication and coordination amongst CCEURO members and the Codex Secretariat hence the reference to the Codex Secretariat was deleted.
48. The Committee also agreed to link Objective 2 with Goal 4 of the Codex Strategic Plan (Implement effective and efficient work management systems and practices).

Action 2.1 – Hold pre-session meetings with all CCEURO members at relevant Codex Committees, Task Forces and Working Groups

49. The Committee agreed that such meetings should also be held at the Commission’s sessions.

Action 2.3 – Develop a regional strategy on issues of mutual interest arising from regional discussions

50. The Committee agreed that issues of mutual interest could also arise from global discussions.

Action 2.5 – Participate as an observer in meetings of other regional committees where appropriate (new)

51. The Committee agreed to include an additional action as important to further foster communication and coordination between CCEURO and other RCCs.

Objective 3 - To strengthen the exchange of scientific and technical expertise amongst experienced and less experienced countries in the Region

52. The Committee deleted the reference to “experienced and less experienced countries in the Region” and replaced them with “CCEURO members” for consistency with previous decision in this regard.
53. The Committee agreed to link Objective 3 with Goal 2 of the Codex Strategic Plan (Ensure the application or risk analysis principles in the development of Codex standards).

Action 3.1 – Identify and prioritize regional issues where there is a need for scientific research/analysis

54. The Committee agreed that identification and prioritization of issues should also address “global” issues and that this approach was consistency with previous decision (see Action 2.3).

Action 3.2 – Develop a list of specialists and institutions which can provide scientific/technical expertise

Action 3.3 – Establish scientific and technical networks amongst the experts and institutions

55. With respect to these actions, delegations noted that these actions were very ambitious; that maintenance of lists / networks were not an easy exercise; and it was not clear who was going to be responsible for updating such lists / networks. In view of this, the Committee agreed to place Actions 3.2 and 3.3 in brackets for further development.
56. The representative of WHO informed the Committee that these two actions fed into the work of scientific advice of FAO/WHO. WHO had a number of databases and networks that needed to be taken into account relating to roster of experts, data collection, etc.
57. The Committee agreed to further develop these two Actions taking into account the need for building synergies of already existing platforms and requested FAO and WHO to work with the Coordinator to further refine these actions. The WHO Representative offered to draft a document that could be discussed in an electronic working group (see paragraph 66).

Action 3.4 – Promote the participation of experts in the Joint FAO/WHO expert bodies and provide data in response to call for data (new)

58. The Committee agreed to include an additional action as important to further foster exchange of scientific and technical expertise amongst CCEURO members.

Objective 4: To promote use of Codex standards as a basis for national legislation and regulations

Action 4.1 – Train technical personnel and policy makers on the need to consider Codex standards

59. The Committee agreed to delete this action as it was already covered by Action 4.2.

Action 4.2 – Increase awareness on the importance of Codex amongst relevant stakeholders

60. The Committee agreed to also refer to “policy makers” for completeness.

Action 4.3 – Assist member countries to harmonize national legislation with Codex standards

61. The Committee noted that Codex standards were of voluntary nature so countries used them as a reference point to build-up their national or regional technical regulations and therefore national legislation did not necessarily “harmonize with” but “takes into account” Codex standards.

Objective 5: To develop and/or review Codex standards taking into account regional interests

62. The Committee agreed to mention other Codex texts in addition to Codex standards as there may be instances where other Codex issues which did not relate to the development of standard may also affect regional interests.

Action 5.2 – Establish national mechanisms for the standard development process

63. The Committee agreed to delete this Action as already covered under Objective 1.

Action 5.3 – Submit all proposals for new standards for products of interest to the Region to CCEURO for consideration prior to submission to the Commission

64. As Objective 5 allowed to other issues of interest to the Region in addition to Codex standards, the Committee agreed to include submission of “other issues” in this Action. The Committee further agreed that submission of proposals / issues should not wait for CCEURO meeting but it could be shared with CCEURO members at any appropriate time.
65. The Delegation of Japan thanked the Netherlands and CCEURO for the hospitality. The Delegation mentioned in particular that discussions and decisions that had been made by CCEURO in relation to various agenda items such as the link between the Regional Strategic Plan and the Codex Strategic Plan will greatly assist the discussions within CCASIA on the same subjects.

Conclusion

66. The Committee agreed to establish an electronic working group, working in English and Russian, and to be chaired by the Netherlands and co-chaired by Ukraine, to further elaborate the document and also take into account the issues raised by the Committee for consideration at its next session.

USE OF “TWINNING” APPROACH IN CCEURO (Agenda Item 8)¹⁰

67. The Coordinator introduced the item and drew the attention of the Committee to the proposed framework for twinning activities in the Region.
68. The Coordinator explained that the framework contained the basic elements to carry out twinning activities between countries of the Region; the modalities of twinning should be kept flexible, e.g. by electronic or physical working groups, but there should be agreement on some key elements that were outlined in the proposed framework; twinning could apply to a number of areas such as legislative development, information / exchange of views on Codex issues, etc.; twinning was a learning exercise to build on trust and experience amongst countries of the Region.
69. The Administrator of CTF called the attention of the Committee to CRD 4 and pointed out that the document contained a background study and literature on mentoring/partnership approaches and their applicability to build capacity for effective participation in the Codex Alimentarius Commission, and also lessons learnt from the pilot initiative in the Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) on the use of partnering in the development of examples on the use of microbiological criteria which was supported by the Codex Trust Fund.

¹⁰

[CX/EURO 14/29/7.](#)

70. As regards how twinning can be supported in practice, the CTF Administrator proposed a number of ways that could be explored by CCEURO members including: timely submission of proposals to the CTF Secretariat; and undertaking twinning as a pilot program whose results could be used in the design of the CTF successor initiative of the CTF.

Conclusion

71. The Committee agreed that the proposed twinning framework was adequate to carry out such activities and noted the following: proposals for twinning activities in the annex of the document could form the basis for further development; there were different ways to undertake twinning activities; and there were possibilities within the framework of CTF to undertake twinning that could be explored.

CODEX WORK RELEVANT FOR THE REGION (Agenda Item 9)¹¹

72. The Coordinator introduced the item and requested views from the Committee on the opportunity to develop regional positions on Codex work of interest to the Region. The Coordinator explained that such positions were not aimed at being presented as CCEURO-positions on Codex matters being considered at the Commission and/or its subsidiary bodies but rather a mechanism to prepare for discussion on issues of interest to the Region on which members of the Region could share same or similar views. The exercise should be restricted to a limited number of issues identified by members of the Region as being of common concern. This could be seen as a capacity building exercise on developing positions on matters of mutual interest for the Region.
73. The Codex Secretariat recalled that, in the framework of the revitalization of RCCs, the development of regional positions by RCCs should not be seen as a rigid or binding position of countries of the Region on Codex matters that may polarize positions and difficult consensus building. Establishment of regional positions should rather be used as a mechanism to identify aspects of the Commission's work of particular significance to the Region on which member countries shared common views and concerns that could be brought to the attention of the Commission. In doing so, CCEURO could exercise a "coordinating role" in the Region which was in compliance with the mandate of RCCs.
74. With reference to a similar proposal considered in CCNASWP, the Representative of WHO highlighted that another purpose for such an approach was to inform all member countries of important on-going Codex work relevant to the Region and the respective background and status of work. This may be important since it was not possible for all members to be present or follow closely all topics that are of relevance to the Region.
75. The Committee noted that delegations generally supported the idea of identifying Codex issues of interest to the Region and of facilitating the exchange of views on these issues as well as the possible development of common views and strategies on these Codex issues of concern. This was also an important tool to bring views and concerns to the attention of CAC and CCEXEC as Coordinators should assist CCEXEC and CAC as required by advising them on matters under discussion of interest to countries of their Region. This exercise should be not be seen as a binding compromise that countries of the Region could not move away from. In this regard, a number of delegations cautioned that the development of regional positions might polarize views and make consensus-building more difficult. (1) To achieve this goal, the use of electronic working groups could be an option.

Conclusion

76. The Committee agreed that identification of issues of common interest to the Region was an important element of the mandate of RCCs and CCEURO should therefore aim to facilitate the exchange of views on appropriate issues and the possible development of shared views; this exercise should be restricted to a limited number of key issues where members of the Region shared same or similar views which would allow members of the Region to come better prepared to discuss food quality and safety issues in CAC and its subsidiary bodies.

NOMINATION OF THE COORDINATOR (Agenda Item 10)¹²

77. The Committee recalled that the Netherlands had been appointed as Coordinator for Europe by 36th Session of the Commission for its first term.
78. The Committee acknowledged the excellent contribution of the Netherlands to Codex work in the Region and unanimously agreed to nominate Netherlands as Coordinator for Europe for a second term, for appointment by the 38th Session of the Commission.

¹¹ [CX/EURO 14/29/8.](#)

¹² [CX/EURO 14/13/9.](#)

79. The Delegation of the Netherlands expressed its thanks to the Committee and its commitment to continue working with all delegations on matters of common interest in the Region.

OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 11)

Language regime of CCEURO

80. The Codex Secretariat informed the Committee that Rule XIV – Languages stated in point (4) that the languages of subsidiary bodies set up under Rule XI.1(b), which included coordinating committees, shall include at least two of the languages of the Commission. In addition, Rule XIII – Budget and Expenses stated in point (2) that the estimate of expenditures shall make provisions for the operating expenses of the Commission and the subsidiary bodies of the Commission established under Rule XI.1(b)(ii), which corresponded to coordinating committees.
81. In compliance with the above requirements, the Codex Secretariat covered the cost for translation and interpretation services for three official languages of the Commission namely English, French and Spanish for CCEURO. Besides, for this Session, the Netherlands, as Coordinator of CCEURO, had taken responsibility for providing translation and interpretation services of an additional official language of CAC i.e. Russian.
82. With regard to the possibility to include a fourth official language, i.e. Russian, considering that the Codex Secretariat already provided three (i.e. English, French and Spanish) as opposed to the minimum of two languages for the operation of CCEURO, and as demonstrated by the fact that the Host Country was providing extra-funding to make available an additional official language (i.e. Russian), the Codex Secretariat was not in a position to commit to provide further resources for translation and/or interpretation services for a fourth official language in CCEURO.
83. The Committee noted that Russian is used as official language in more than 10 countries of the Region. The inclusion of Russian as working language of CCEURO was essential for the smooth preparation and running of sessions of CCEURO. The Coordinator therefore proposed to request the Commission to consider the possibility to finance translation and interpretation services in Russian for the operation of CCEURO.
84. The Delegation of Russia, supported by several delegations, indicated that Russian was widely spoken in the Region, Russian was the first or second language in many countries of the Region, and therefore urged to request the Commission to consider the possibility to accommodate the use of Russian in CCEURO.
85. The Delegation of Spain, whilst not challenging the principle of the proposal, noted that the discussion of language regime under other business was not appropriate. In their view, language regime in CCEURO deserved a separate agenda item supported by a background paper in order to have a fully informed discussion on this matter.
86. The Committee agreed to request the Commission to consider the possibility to finance translation and interpretation services in Russian in CCEURO.

CCEURO website

87. The Committee welcomed the initiative by the Codex Secretariat to develop a web platform to integrate the information published on the existing websites of the Codex Regional Committees within the Codex website framework. The platform would support multi (official) languages and would provide the possibility for uploading news, texts, documents, images and would allow for updating of data and information by host governments.

Candidature of Norway as Member of CCEXEC for the European Region

88. The Delegation of Norway informed the Committee of their intention to stand for the candidature for member to be elected based on geographical representation for Europe at the 70th CCEXEC in 2015 after the expiry of the term of France.
89. The Committee noted the information provided.

Regional workshop on food safety

90. The Delegation of Russia informed the Committee that a regional workshop on Codex and food safety was scheduled to be held in Saint-Petersburg, Russia in 2015. The aim of this workshop would be to share experiences and to exchange information and build capacities on Codex related food safety issues including risk assessment and risk management.

91. The Representatives of FAO, WHO and the CTF Administrator thanked Russia for the willingness to host the regional workshop and indicated their willingness to work with the host country in drawing up the workshop program.
92. The Committee noted the information provided.

Report from the Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

93. The Delegate of Switzerland, speaking as the Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, briefly informed the Committee about the activities that she had undertaken over the past few months since being elected as the Chairperson which included among others: official visits to Codex member countries, participating in international conferences and attending regional Committee Meetings. She highlighted the fact that she had taken each opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of Codex work among relevant stakeholders. She pointed out that from these activities, there was an emerging trend pointing to the fact that scientific advice and awareness about Codex activities were the main areas of focus. She appealed to CCEURO members to look for innovative approaches in order to ensure funding for sustainable scientific advice for Codex.
94. An observer country also stressed the importance of sustainable funding for scientific advice to support Codex work and expressed interest in working with CCEURO members on innovative approaches.
95. The Committee thanked the Chairperson for the up-dating and noted the information provided.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION (Agenda Item 12)

96. The Committee was informed that its 30th Session would be held in approximately two years' time and that more detailed arrangements would be communicated to Members following the appointment of the Coordinator by the 38th Session of the Commission and consultation with the Codex Secretariat.

ANNEX
SUMMARY STATUS OF WORK

SUBJECT MATTER	STEP	ACTION BY	DOCUMENT REFERENCE REP15/EURO
Proposed draft Regional Standard for Ayran	Discontinued	38 th CAC	Para. 37
Regional Strategic Plan for CCEURO	---	EWG (Netherlands and Ukraine) 30 th CCEURO	para. 66

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