

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Twentieth Session

Viña del Mar, Chile, 21-25 November 2016

MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN (Strategic plan for CCLAC 2013-2019– Status of implementation)

(Prepared by Chile)

INTRODUCTION

At the Eighteenth Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC) held in San José, Costa Rica, in November 2012, the proposed Regional Strategic Plan for CCLAC for 2013-2019 was formulated in accordance with the Codex Alimentarius Commission Strategic Plan (CAC).¹ The Chair informed the Committee that there was currently no arrangement for the Coordinator to report to CCLAC on the activities carried out during the mandate, and proposed that the country responsible for coordinating the Committee should present an activity report to the region's member countries during any CCLAC meetings held during that mandate. The Committee approved the proposal.

In its capacity as Regional Coordinator for the period 2015-2017, Chile is therefore pleased to present the report on activities during the period from July 2015 to November 2016 (in accordance with the Regional Strategic Plan approved by the CCLAC in November 2012).

When Chile took over coordinating the CCLAC chair, it coordinated with Costa Rica on handing over information on CCLAC activities. The topics transferred to Chile included the Regional Strategic Plan. The document received by Chile was structured as follows:

Objective 1: Promote effective communication between CCLAC members and other Codex members and regions, the Codex Secretariat and relevant organizations.

- Specific objective 1.1: Improve the mechanisms for information exchange and the use of electronic media.
- Specific objective 1.2: Improve regional cohesion, with a view to harmonizing positions and strengthening the participation of countries in Codex meetings.
- Specific objective 1.3: Formulate a strategy for improving communication with the Coordinating Committees of other regions.

Objective 2: Ensure the active participation of all of the region's countries in the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its Subsidiary Bodies (and particularly in the CCLAC).

- Specific objective 2.1: Improve communication and unity among Spanish-speaking and English-speaking members.

Objective 3: Promote capacity development and capacity building for Codex Focal Points and/or National Committees in CCLAC member countries.

- Specific objective 3.1: Promote capacity development and capacity building, in accordance with the needs of each country or group of countries.

Objective 4: Harness existing scientific and technical capacities within CCLAC member countries.

- Specific objective 4.1: Strengthen the capacities of the region's countries to participate in the Committees of FAO/WHO Experts through the generation of relevant scientific information and data.

¹ REP13/LAC para. 189-201.

- Specific objective 4.2: Introduce cooperation projects and other technical assistance mechanisms among the region's countries in order to strengthen and increase the capacities of Codex National Committees and Subcommittees in the region.

Objective 5: Ensure continuity, development and sustainability of the Committee's work.

- Specific objective 5.1: Devise an Operational Plan to be implemented between CCLAC meetings, in accordance with the Strategic Plan.
- Specific objective 5.2: Promote the use of the Codex digital information system module.

I. Activity report

Following Chile's approval by the CAC in its Thirty-eighth Session,² Chile has continued to implement the CCLAC 2013-2019 Regional Strategic Plan.³

Below are the activities carried out between July 2015 and November 2016.

1. Seminar: Codex Alimentarius – overview and challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Once it had taken over the CCLAC coordination, in September 2015 Chile held its first event as Regional Coordinator: a Codex Alimentarius Seminar that was the country's formal launch as CCLAC Coordinator. All of the region was invited, while the event was also attended by Codex Alimentarius Chairperson, Awilo Ochieng; Commission Vice-Chairperson, Guilherme Da Costa; Gracia Brisco from the Codex secretariat; and relevant speakers from the Codex national structure in Costa Rica, Argentina and Brazil.

2. Discussion with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA).

In September 2015, IICA collaboration and support resulted in a discussion with senior Codex Alimentarius officials to identify recommendations and suggestions around relevant topics of interest to the CCLAC Coordinator and the region. The result of the two-day workshop was the document "Dialogue on Strategic Issues for the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC)", which included recommendations, suggestions and experiences for the CCLAC Coordinator.

3. Regional videoconferences.

English- and Spanish-language videoconferences on coordination have been held in the lead up to all international Codex meetings (which means a total of 19 such virtual meetings in the period in question). Technical videoconferences have also been held at the request of the region's member countries.

Following each virtual meeting, the CCLAC secretariat sends a summary to all of the region's members (in English and Spanish) to improve effective communication in the region.

4. Coordination meetings in Codex Committees.

Given the positive results of gathering the region's countries together at Codex meetings prior to each plenary session, Chile has continued the practice. In the days running up to the Codex plenary sessions (as well as on each day prior to the session), coordination meetings have been held with the region's countries. That setting has also been used to promote an exchange of opinions with parties including various international delegations, industries and Coordination Committees.

Facilitating such forums has given the region's countries the tools to build consensus, exchange opinions and align country positions, as well as providing feedback for and/or strengthening national positions.

The opinion of the region has also been strengthened, as well as providing an opportunity for promoting integration among all CCLAC members by developing and facilitating communication among countries.

5. Physical meetings of Codex Alimentarius.

In its role as Regional Coordinator, Chile has participated in all physical meetings leading up to each plenary Codex session. Chile also took part in the meeting for the physical Working Group on Processed Cheese (Committee on Milk and Milk Products (CCMMP)), held in Uruguay in December 2015.

6. Virtual technical forums.

Technical videoconferences have been organized in conjunction with IICA on various topics of interest to promote information exchange in the region. The aim is to have technical arguments to support the drafting of country positions at the national level.

² REP15/CAC para. 185.

³ CX/LAC 12/18/14.

Technical collaboration with Paraguay to develop the analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in terms of Codex operations at the national level.

7. IICA Twinning Programme.

In conjunction with IICA, Chile has participated in several forums disseminating the Codex Alimentarius through the IICA Twinning Programme. This has included:

- Workshop on negotiation for international Codex Alimentarius meetings, Uruguay, September 2015. The main objective was to take part in the course on Codex Alimentarius negotiation.
- Workshop to strengthen the role of academia in the Codex Alimentarius, Ecuador, December 2015. The aims were to link academia to the activities of Ecuador's National Food Code Committee (CNCA) by increasing the sector's skills and knowledge to facilitate such participation, while also promoting the generation of the necessary inputs and data to set standards on Codex-related topics.
- Codex Twinning Programme in Dominica and Antigua and Barbuda, March 2016. The goal here was to support the strengthening of Codex institutions and share good practices in Codex management.
- National Codex Strengthening Workshop in Paraguay, April 2016. The main idea was to improve understanding about the importance of prioritizing Codex issues at the national level.
- Workshop for strengthening technical capacities and knowledge on the Codex Alimentarius standard-setting process among members and alternate members of the National Codex Committee (CNC), Peru, October 2016. The main aim was to promote high-level contacts and exchanges to raise awareness about the role and responsibilities of decision-makers in the management of the Codex Alimentarius based on shared international experiences.

8. South-South Cooperation.

- In the context of international cooperation, Chile and IICA are jointly implementing a project on "Strengthening Codex Functioning at the National Level in Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Lucia and Suriname", which aims to strengthen the technical capacity of participants to improve national Codex operations. The project is being funded by the UNDP/Chile Fund Against Hunger and Poverty⁴ in conjunction with IICA. The project has also received contributions from the United States for the implementation of activities.
- In September 2015, Chile took part in the regional discussion organized by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and IICA to emphasize the use of science and the Codex Procedural Manual in international meetings. The discussion took place in Washington, United States.
- The Chilean Industrial Property Association (ACHIPIA) took part in the "Sub-regional East African Food Safety Capacity Building Workshop" in December 2015. The focus of the workshop was to bring together the CCLAC and the Codex Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) through an exchange of experiences between Chile and CCAFRICA countries in terms of technical capacity and management for Codex operations. The workshop took place in Uganda and was attended by the Chairperson of the CAC.
- Participation of ACHIPIA (as part of coordination by the CCLAC secretariat) in the FAO workshop in Panama in June 2016; delivery of presentations on food safety and the process being implemented in Chile to adopt a food risk-analysis approach for its national food control system.

9. Ongoing communication with the region.

To maintain ongoing communication with the region, a special e-mail address was set up (cclac@achipia.gob.cl) to stay in constant touch with the Codex Focal Points for each country. This channel is used to distribute documents such as country positions, CRDs, information documents, early reminders of expiry of Codex documents and other important information for the region.

10. Participation in Symposia.

In its capacity as Regional Coordinator, Chile has taken part in the following:

- CCLAC Symposium in Uruguay: topics included CCFH, CCFFV, CCNFSDU. August 2015.
- CCLAC Symposium in Mexico: topics included CCCF, CCFA, CCPR. February 2016.
- CCLAC – CCAFRICA, Symposium, Atlanta: topics included CCGP. March 2016.

⁴ www.fondochile.cl.

- CCASIA – USDA Symposium, India: topics included CCFH and CCRVDF. Chile shared with CCASIA countries the CCLAC coordination methodologies for managing regional positions. August 2016.

II. Future actions

A workshop on participation in Codex activities will be held in Santiago, Chile, from 5 to 7 December 2016. The workshop is part of the programme on Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) funded by the European Commission.

III. Conclusions

In its role as Regional Coordinator, Chile would like to thank the region's member countries for trusting it to fulfil that role in 2015-2017. The country is also grateful for the constant support from institutions such as IICA, FAO, WHO/PAHO, Codex Trust Fund and the Codex Secretariat.

With the work carried out in the first mandate period of CCLAC coordination, the region has strengthened its image as a coordinated region able to reach regional agreements that have enabled it to put forward its concerns and issues in the various Codex committees.

There is still room for ongoing improvement: a strengthening of the region's scientific contribution to expert bodies providing scientific assistance (Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR), the Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Microbiological Risk Assessment (JEMRA) and the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA)); more open communication channels with other regions, delegations and Codex members; and a consolidation of Codex functioning at the national level all remain areas that require further development.

Chile reaffirms its commitment to work to position the region within the sphere of discussions held in the various Codex Alimentarius bodies.