CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION E

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

World Health Organization

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Agenda item 3 **CX/FICS 18/24/3**
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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD IMPORT AND EXPORT INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS

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INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WHO AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS RELEVANT TO THE WORK OF CCFICS

(Prepared by FAO and WHO)

1. The present document is a report on the tools produced and made available to Member States and the relevant activities carried out since the last meeting of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export and Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS).

FAO guidance on risk-based inspection

2. FAO is in the process of updating existing and producing new guidance on risk based inspection. Besides the recently published "Risk based imported food controls" (available in English (http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5381e.pdf), French (http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5381f.pdf) and Spanish (http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5381s.pdf), work is ongoing on:

- the design and implementation of modern risk-based meat inspection systems,
- risk based fish inspection (update of an earlier publication)

3. New work was initiated in September 2018 on risk categorization approaches as a support to inspection planning. The objective is to review current approaches used by member countries and propose a set of principles, supported by practical examples suitable to different contexts, given varying capacities to access, collect and analyse relevant data, to encourage gradual improvement of planning and data collection processes.

FAO/WHO Food Control System Assessment Tool

4. FAO and WHO have worked jointly to offer Member Countries a tool to assess, in structured, transparent and measurable ways, the performance of their food control system throughout the entire food chain, identify priority areas for capacity development, and measure and evaluate progress over time. FAO and WHO have finalized the content and approach of the food control system assessment tool.

5. To date, the tool has been tested in ten countries in Africa, Asia and the Near East. The experiences and feedback from field-testing have been incorporated in an updated version, which is currently in press and expected for release in 2018. Translation in Arabic, French and Spanish are also in process. This tool will be supported by a package allowing meaningful use for self-assessment. Following its publication, it is expected that the tool will be regularly reviewed and updated based on feedback received from users in countries or directly by FAO and WHO. To facilitate widespread use of the FAO/WHO Assessment Tool, training is envisaged to develop a pool of reliable facilitators.

Antimicrobial resistance

6. An update of the FAO and WHO activities on AMR was presented to the 41st session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in July 2018 and the relevant information is available in CAC41 REP18CAC.

7. At the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2016 in New York, heads of states and governments of 193 Member States convened to address issues including AMR and to collectively address this challenge to health, food security and development. This resulted in a UN General Assembly Political Declaration A/RES/71/3 which reaffirmed the Global Action Plan (GAP) on antimicrobial resistance as the blueprint for tackling AMR, emphasized, among other issues, the importance of National Action Plans (NAPs) and requested WHO, FAO, OIE and others to support countries in their development and implementation. In addition it requested the establishment of an ad hoc Inter-Agency Coordination Group (IACG), to provide practical guidance for approaches needed to ensure sustained effective global action to

address AMR. The group held its first meeting on 2-3 May 2017. The first report is available at http://www.who.int/antimicrobial-resistance/interagency-coordination-group/IACG-firstMtgReport.pdf

8. FAO, OIE and WHO are developing a monitoring framework for implementation of the GAP. An expert consultation on appropriate indicators was convened in Geneva on 8-9 June 2017 and a public consultation on the monitoring framework and proposed indicators, in which all sectors, including the food sector, are strongly encouraged to participate, was initiated during the third quarter of 2017.

9. The ad hoc Codex Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (TFAMR) has been established and met in Jeju, Republic of Korea, in November-December 2017.

10. FAO, OIE and WHO have since 2011 defined AMR as a priority area for the Tripartite Collaboration. The three Organizations worked side by side on the development of the GAP and are leading several initiatives to support the GAP implementation through an effective "One Health" approach. In May 2018, the Directors-General of FAO, WHO and OIE had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to further strengthen tripartite collaboration and their leadership on the critical global issue of antimicrobial resistance (AMR). A tripartite workplan for the period 2019-2020 on AMR is in process with a focus meeting planned for 12th September 2018.

11. FAO, OIE and WHO, in consultation with UNEP, have developed a draft proposal for the global development a stewardship framework to combat AMR, as mandated by the UN High Level Declaration in 2016, and will present this to its member states at a second consultation of member states and partners in October 2018.

12. FAO is developing capacities of member countries in the areas of awareness raising as a prerequisite for change and commitment to action, surveillance, monitoring, and laboratory capacity, governance, good practices and prudent use in food and agriculture. Activities are underway in selected countries in seven African countries, seven Asian countries, six Eastern European countries and seven Latin American countries. Further outreach is being achieved through collaboration with Regional bodies.

13. There are many ongoing AMC/AMR surveillance activities across the different sectors of the three organizations. In addition to the WHO Advisory Group on Integrated Surveillance of Antimicrobial Resistance (AGISAR) pilot projects that have since 2010 fostered integrated surveillance in 36 countries, there are ongoing efforts to capture global data on AMR and AMC in humans through the WHO Global AMR Surveillance System (GLASS), AMC in animals led by the OIE, and through the FAO Assessment Tool for Laboratory and AMR Surveillance Systems (ATLASS). But the information resulting from these efforts are not yet connected.

14. WHO Advisory Group on Integrated Surveillance of Antimicrobial Resistance (AGISAR) has revised the WHO AGISAR guidance document on integrated surveillance on AMR and updated the list of WHO critically important antimicrobials for human medicine at the end of 2016. Both documents are available at http://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/agisar_guidance2017/en/ WHO has developed a guideline on the use of antimicrobials in food producing animals based on the WHO list of critically important antimicrobials for human medicine, the guideline was launched on November 2017, it is available at http://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/cia_guidelines/en/ .

Early warning/alert and response to food safety emergencies

15. The Secretariat of the joint FAO/WHO International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN), continues to develop and strengthen the Network. The INFOSAN Secretariat responds to more than 40 food safety emergencies each year, facilitating rapid communication among INFOSAN members across all regions. Two major events that began in 2017 and continued into 2018 include an outbreak of salmonellosis in France linked to domestically produced infant formula that was exported to more than 80 countries and the world's largest ever recorded outbreak of Listeriosis in South Africa linked to domestically produced ready-to-eat meat products that were exported to 15 countries. During both of these events, the INFOSAN Secretariat relied on the swift action of national INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points to respond to Information Requests. The INFOSAN Secretariat was subsequently able to rapidly notify INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points in importing countries of the details of the recalled products to stop their distribution, and allow members around the world to implement appropriate risk management measures to prevent additional cases of illness.

16. Membership to INFOSAN has continued to grow during the 2016/2017 biennium, increasing by 13 percentage points with notable growth in Africa and in the Americas; 82% of all WHO Member States now have an active INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point.

17. Efforts to strengthen partnerships with regional authorities and networks have continued with the European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA) Emerging Risks Exchange Network (EREN), the European Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF), the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), the African Union Food Safety Management Coordination Mechanism (AU-FSMCM) and the Asia-Pacific

Economic Cooperation (APEC). The establishment of linkages with the Arab Food Safety Initiative for Trade Facilitation (Arab SAFE) is being pursued.

18. INFOSAN members' knowledge and capabilities to participate actively in the Network and respond effectively to food safety emergencies has been further developed through the delivery of several webinars, conducted by the INFOSAN Secretariat in English, French and Spanish. In addition, technical webinars were delivered in English and French by INFOSAN members in Canada and the USA and were widely attended by INFOSAN members from around the globe. The webinars provided an opportunity for INFOSAN members to exchange information and share lessons learned about various technical topics related to food safety and foodborne diseases that are of interest to INFOSAN members around the globe.

19. In 2017, online emergency simulation exercises were run in English, French and Spanish for countries in the Americas and Africa targeting INFOSAN Emergency Contact Points and National IHR Focal Points. Participation in such exercises tests national and international coordination mechanisms and bolsters preparedness for food safety emergency response.

Food Fraud

20. FAO has recently published an *Overview of Food Fraud in the Fisheries Sector* (http://www.fao.org/3/I8791EN/i8791en.pdf), which, *inter alia*, provides an overview of the scale and global incidence of fish fraud. This paper indicates an important role for the Codex Alimentarius Commission to work in collaboration with countries in order to develop international principles and guidelines designed to identify, manage and mitigate fraudulent practices in food trade and to develop guidelines to standardize food safety management systems for fish fraud vulnerability assessment.

21. In addition, FAO is currently engaged with four member countries to carry out case studies on food fraud. The FAO Food Safety and Quality Unit is also working with the FAO Legal office on a legislative study in support of food fraud prevention.

Regional and national activities

22. During the past year, FAO and WHO have continued to implement a large number of capacity development activities covering a wide range of food safety topics in countries around the globe.

23. In the Africa region, FAO conducted more than 20 training workshops on a range of subjects including risk-based meat inspection, Risk based approaches for imported food control and the assessment of national food control systems.

24. In the Asia and Pacific region, close to 30 FAO supported workshops were held on topics such as risk analysis to improve capacity of effective risk-based food import control, enhanced coordination to implement risk- based food import control; and the development of operating procedures to facilitate risk-based imported food control. The Joint FAO/IAEA division has offered a regional course on the Fundamentals of Using Nuclear Techniques for Verifying Food Authenticity.

25. In the Europe region, FAO organized some 20 workshops addressing a range of issues including improved operation of the national food control system focusing on inspection, monitoring and laboratory components; as well as strengthening the capacities of national food control authorities and food producing enterprises for the implementation of risk analysis framework.

28. In the region of Latin America and the Caribbean, FAO conducted a series of regional training events to build capacity on the use of the risk assessment framework for food control purposes, while in the Near East Region two countries are being supported in assessing their national food control systems.

29. In the WHO South-East Asia Region, assessment of foodborne disease surveillance of and response to foodborne diseases has been completed in 8 out of 11 countries. Advocacy meeting on Codex and INFOSAN has been organized in several countries which helped them to establish a functional National Codex Committee in respective countries. Training on outbreak investigation and response was organized in Bhutan, Myanmar and Timor-Leste. Bhutan, India and Nepal submitted a joint project proposal to the Codex Trust Fund which has been approved. Maldives and Nepal have developed National Food Safety Policy. Bhutan has completed AGISAR project. The WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia has taken initiative to draft a Framework for Action on Food Safety for WHO South-East Asia Region. A tripartite coordination mechanism has been established for better coordination and collaboration among FAO, OIE and WHO for zoonoses, food safety and AMR activities in the Asia-Pacific region and several joint activities have been identified for implementation. Timor-Leste became 188th Member of the Codex Alimentarious Commission in 2018.

30. In the WHO Western Pacific Region, the Regional Framework for Action on Food Safety was adopted by the 68th Session of the Regional Committee for the Western Pacific. The framework provides guidance to Member States on strategic action and a stepwise approach to strengthen national food system. For the Pacific island countries and areas, a practical guidance document has been developed to improve access to food

analysis capacity within and beyond the subregion. In Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam, technical support has been provided to strengthen food safety policy and legal frameworks in line with Codex and the regional approach for food safety system strengthening.

31. In the WHO Region of Americas, a Food Safety Risk Analysis Consortium (FSRisk) was created with participation of international organizations and universities from USA, Canada and Costa Rica. The group is preparing a programme to strengthen and harmonize risk analysis capacity in the region. National food safety system assessment and improvements is ongoing in Suriname, El Salvador and Costa Rica. Technical cooperation strengthened Codex national committees in Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. The Inter American Network of Food Analysis Laboratories offered 12 webinars, with 4864 participants from all the regions. AMR integrated surveillance activities in the region including INFAL and RELAVRA coordinated activities. Establishment of an inter-agency group (PAHO, OIE, FAO, OIRSA and IICA) to coordinate AMR integrated surveillance activities in the region.

32. In the WHO Africa Region, capacity of epidemiologists and/or laboratory scientists from national institutions representing food, animal and human health sectors from 20 countries were strengthened on integrated surveillance of foodborne diseases and antimicrobial resistance. Implementation of AGISAR projects on integrated surveillance of foodborne antimicrobial resistance in 9 countries (Chad, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia and Zimbabwe) with two countries having completed (The Gambia and Togo). Risk-based food inspection manual has been elaborated in Togo with multi-sectoral national food safety strategic plans elaborated in three countries to lay the foundation for enhanced cross-sectoral collaboration among the relevant ministries.