

# codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



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## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

### CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

*Twenty-Fourth Session, Geneva, 2-7 July 2001*

### REPORT OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

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**SUMMARY OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION**

***28-30 June 2000, WHO Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland***

**The Executive Committee:**

- noted the changes to the General Rules of FAO concerning electronic voting (para. 9);
- welcomed the decision of the World Health Assembly concerning increased involvement and support of WHO in the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its committees (paras. 11-12);
- asked that resources requirements for high priority areas of the Commission's work be identified (para. 15);
- agreed that many of the recommendations of the *FAO Conference on World Food Trade beyond 2000: Science-based Decisions, Harmonization, Equivalence and Mutual Recognition* should be incorporated into the Medium-Term Plan and that others were already being acted upon (paras. 22-26);
- noted, in regard to risk communication, the need to explore strategies to collect information from all regions of the world (para. 23);
- requested to be kept informed of developments concerning the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, the World Trade Organization, and on OECD/G-8 recommendations of biotechnology and other aspects of food safety (paras. 27-32);
- requested the Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables to discuss the implications of the OECD proposal to establish a single international grade standards setting body (paras. 33-34);
- agreed that the next Medium-Term Plan be drafted by a small group consisting of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons (paras. 36-41);
- approved 24 items of new work by Codex subsidiary committees/task forces and advanced 12 proposed draft standards to Step 6 (paras. 43-49 and Appendices II and III);
- made the general observation that justification for new work proposals should be properly documented (para. 44);
- welcomed the proposal to reactivate the Committee on Meat Hygiene to review the existing codes of practice and agreed that the mandate of the Committee should be extended to include poultry (para. 46);
- confirmed that responsibility for a system-wide approach to the consideration of "other legitimate factors" rested with the Committee on General Principles and that no further action on this matter should be taken by other Committees at the moment (para. 56);
- recommended a draft Provisional Agenda for the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for consideration by the Directors-General of FAO and WHO (paras. 57-58);
- made comments on a proposed "Action Plan" prepared by the Chairperson and asked for the Action Plan to be revised and circulated to Governments and Regional Coordinating Committees (paras. 62-71).



## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

### REPORT OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

*28-30 June 2000, WHO Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland*

#### **INTRODUCTION**

1. The Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission held its Forty-seventh Session at WHO Headquarters, Geneva from 28 to 30 June 2000. The Session was chaired by the Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Mr. Thomas Billy (USA) and was attended by the three Vice-Chairpersons and the seven Members of the Commission elected on a regional basis and their advisors. Regional Coordinators appointed by the Commission attended the Session as Observers. A complete list of participants including the Secretariat is given in Appendix I of this report.

#### **STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL, WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION**

2. The Session was opened by the Director-General of WHO, Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland. She welcomed the participants and introduced the resolution of the World Health Assembly May 2000, which acknowledged that Codex Alimentarius was a fundamental tool for improving food safety and called on WHO to increase its involvement and technical support in the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. She stated that, in order to substantiate the decision, WHO would strengthen its capacity in providing sound scientific advice and will review the current working relationship with FAO under the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme.

3. The Executive Committee expressed its appreciation of the personal interest in the work of the Commission expressed by the Director-General in her statement and also appreciation for her efforts in bringing the issue of food safety in the Codex Alimentarius Commission to the attention of WHO Members.

#### **STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON**

4. The Chairperson, referring to the challenges facing the Codex Alimentarius Commission, stated that the Commission needed to maintain and strengthen its international credibility and relevance and that to do so it needed to develop and implement mechanisms that were effective in dealing with emerging food safety issues on a timely basis. Mechanisms were also needed to strengthen and improve the participation of developing countries and improve transparency of decision making. To do this, the Chairperson proposed an Action Plan<sup>1</sup>, containing a set of actions related to organization of Commission meetings; a proposed replacement for the Executive Committee as an advisory body to the Commission; structural and meeting arrangements for horizontal, commodity committees and Regional Committees; the establishment of a trust fund to support developing country participation; increased use of the internet; and arrangements for the Commission's expert advisory bodies.

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<sup>1</sup> Distributed as Conference Room Document 3.

5. The Executive Committee later decided to discuss the Chairperson's Action Plan under Agenda Item 9 (see paras 62 - 71).

### **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda Item 1)**

6. The Executive Committee adopted the Provisional Agenda<sup>2</sup> as the Agenda for its Session. It was agreed to discuss the Action Plan proposed by the Chairperson under Agenda Item 9 (Other Business). At the request of the Regional Representative for South-west Pacific, it agreed to discuss matters regarding overall microbiological risk assessment under Agenda Item 4 and the reactivation of the Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene under Agenda Item 7 (Implementation of the Commission's Programme of Work) and, if necessary, Agenda Item 9 (Other Business). At the request of the Regional Representative for North America, it also agreed to discuss arrangements for the sequential handling of work by different Codex Committees under Agenda Item 9.

### **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 30<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF FAO CONFERENCE AND THE 53<sup>RD</sup> SESSION OF THE WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY OF WHO (Agenda Item 2)<sup>3</sup>**

#### FAO Conference

7. The Representative of FAO informed the Executive Committee of the main outcome of the November 1999 FAO Conference which were of relevance to Codex. He informed in particular of the Conference's adoption of a Strategic Framework from the Organization covering the period 2000–2015 and its endorsement of the protection against any budgetary cuts of key priority areas, including Codex, International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the Special Programme on Food Security and the Technical Cooperation Programme. Within FAO Strategic Framework for 2000–2015, strategies for promoting, developing and reinforcing policy and regulatory frameworks for food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries include the development of international standards and other measures and assisting developing countries in implementing these standards and measures in food safety, plant protection and animal health..

8. The Representative of FAO further informed of the amendment of the General Rules of the Organization to provide for electronic voting.

9. The Executive Committee noted these developments and their impact on FAO's contribution to Codex. It also noted with interest the changes to the General Rules of FAO regarding the electronic voting which may be used by the Commission should the need arise, but also noted the Commission's desire to arrive at decisions by consensus.

#### Fifty-third World Health Assembly

10. The Representative from WHO introduced the Director-General's report on Food Safety to World Health Assembly in May 2000 and the resolution adopted by the Assembly. The Assembly recognised that foodborne diseases were widespread and represented growing threats to health in both developing and developed countries and it emphasised the importance of a better estimation of the burden of foodborne diseases and the development of regional and/or national targets for reduction of the incidence of foodborne diseases.

11. The Representative also stated that microbiological risk assessment, provision of scientific advice on biotechnology, improvement of risk communication were considered as some of the most important areas for future activities of WHO and that improvement had already been made

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<sup>2</sup> CX/EXEC 00/47/1

<sup>3</sup> CX/EXEC 00/47/2

in terms of transparency in the operation of WHO and FAO expert committees and of the collection of data for microbiological risk assessment from developing countries. Regarding the review of the current working relationship between FAO and WHO, the Representative stated that WHO's role in Codex was in health, so that, for example, the financial contribution by WHO to the Codex Joint Budget should be focused on health related work of the Commission. The Executive Committee was informed that the review of the current working relationship between two organizations had already been initiated.

12. The Executive Committee welcomed the decision made by the World Health Assembly and expected WHO to fully implement the decision made by the Assembly.

### **FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY MATTERS<sup>4</sup> (Agenda Item 3)**

13. In accordance with Rule XI.1 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure, the Secretariat tabled a report on the expenditures of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme for the biennium 1998/99 and the approved budget for 2000/2001. The Executive Committee noted the statement of expenditures for 1998/99 and the fact that an surplus of US\$75,000 had been carried forward in the cost-sharing Joint Budget into the present biennium. The Executive Committee also noted that in part the surplus of budget over expenditure was due to the unfilled vacancy of post of Chief of the Joint Programme in the period from August 1999 to the end of the biennium. It was reported that from 2000 onwards, FAO had agreed to transfer this post from the Joint Programme to the FAO Regular Programme as Chief of the Food Quality and Standards Service and to abolish the post of Chief, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme. Nevertheless, the post remained vacant.

14. The Executive Committee noted that not only this post, but also the post of FAO Secretary to the JECFA had remained unfilled for a long period of time and expressed its considerable concern at this situation, although the functioning of the JECFA post had been ensured by the FAO Partnership Programme. It called upon FAO to take immediate steps to fill these posts so as to restore the effective functioning of the Commission and JECFA.

15. The Executive Committee noted that the approved budget for 2000/2001 was considered adequate to deliver the programme at the same level as in the previous biennium but expressed concern that this may not be adequate to meet the additional demands for new work and improvements in the timeliness. Resource requirements for new work or for high priority areas that needed strengthening should be identified. In particular, it noted that the Codex Secretariat employed under the Joint Budget had been reduced in size as a result of the changes mentioned above, but noted that this was offset in part by the voluntary support in terms of professional staff provided to the Codex Secretariat through the FAO Government Cooperation and Associate Expert Programmes and the provision of a part-time staff member from WHO.

16. It commended the work of the joint Secretariat in providing efficient support to the Commission and its subsidiary committees, including the workload associated with the increasing demands on the Commission and the increased number of meetings. The Executive Committee called upon FAO and WHO to give serious consideration to increasing the number of permanent professional staff in the Secretariat, and also called upon Member governments to consider the possibility of further supporting the Secretariat through voluntary programmes such as those mentioned above. It requested the Secretariat to include details of these voluntary programmes in its next report.

17. In response to questions raised by Members, it was noted that the Codex (Joint) Budget did not provide resources for risk communication or for direct support for the participation of developing country participation in Codex meetings. On the other hand it was noted that part of the FAO-only budget was used for holding national workshops on the establishment and

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<sup>4</sup> CX/EXEC 00/47/3.

administration of national Codex Contact Points and national Codex Committees, either from the Codex Secretariat directly or through FAO Regional and Sub-Regional Offices.

18. The Representative of FAO informed the Committee of the other indirect contributions that the Organization made to the Codex programme. These include (i) the normative work in food safety risk assessment carried out jointly with WHO (JECFA, JMPR, Microbiological Risk Assessment, Evaluation of Foods derived from Biotechnology) and other expert consultations; (ii) the development of manuals and guidelines on various aspects of food quality and safety ; and, (iii) the technical assistance provided to Member countries to enhance their participation in Codex through, in particular, the establishment and/or strengthening of National Codex Committees. He indicated that under FAO's Technical Cooperative Programme (TCP) some 20 countries were being supported in this field with a total budget of over US \$ 2.5 million.

19. The Representative of FAO further informed of the support given by FAO, in collaboration with other organizations, to the holding of Regional thematic workshops prior to the meetings of most Regional Codex Coordinating Committees which constituted a direct contribution to the participation of these countries in Codex work.

20. Regarding the budget for 2000-2001, the "WHO-only budget" was presented for the first time. The budget covered the cost for convening ad hoc expert consultations on microbiological risk assessment and biotechnology, which were closely related to the work of the Commission. The Representative of WHO stated that within the current biennial further fund from the WHO regular budget would be provided for food safety activities and that it would be mainly used to produce scientific advice to support health related work of the Commission.

21. The Executive Committee also noted the on-going discussions between FAO and WHO on their working relationship that were being undertaken with a view to increasing the involvement and support of WHO in the work of the Commission and its committees. The Executive Committee looked forward to the completion of this effort by FAO and WHO and of being informed of the outcome of the discussions between the two parent organizations. It renewed its call for close cooperation between FAO and WHO notably in the context of Codex Alimentarius.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON FOOD TRADE BEYOND 2000: SCIENCE-BASED DECISIONS, HARMONIZATION, EQUIVALENCE AND MUTUAL RECOGNITION<sup>5</sup> (Agenda Item 4)**

22. The Representative of FAO introduced the working document describing the outcome of the "International Conference on Food Trade Beyond 2000: Science-based Decisions, Harmonization, Equivalence and Mutual Recognition" organized by FAO, and held in Melbourne, Australia, 11-15 October 1999 in co-operation with WHO and WTO. He informed that the Conference made a large number of recommendations which addressed each one of the issues discussed at the Conference. He referred in particular to Annex I of the document which reproduced the "General Recommendations of the Conference", and to Annex II which contained a compilation of those recommendations that are addressed to, or can be acted upon by, the Codex Alimentarius Commission and/or its subsidiary bodies.

23. The Executive Committee noted with satisfaction the Conference's appreciation of the work of the Commission and its fullest support to the current direction of its work. The Executive Committee further noted that the vast majority of the "General Recommendations" contained in Annex I were addressed to Member Governments and/or FAO and WHO. It noted that several of these recommendations would need to be considered in the development of the Medium Term Plan (Item 6). On recommendations 10 and 14, the Executive Committee recognised the

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<sup>5</sup> CX/EXEC 00/47/4

importance of risk communication for Codex and the need to explore strategies to collect information from all regions of the world about consumer requirements, perceptions, beliefs, and motivations concerning food, nutrition and food safety. It agreed that the matter should be discussed at the Codex Regional Committees and that the Secretariat should explore ways of conducting a pilot study for generating such information. The Executive Committee noted that several countries and organizations have conducted studies in this field and suggested that a literature review be made on the subject by the Secretariat.

24. The Executive Committee strongly supported closely coordinated and early action by FAO and WHO and the Codex Alimentarius Commission on microbiological food safety issues within their respective areas of responsibility.

25. The Executive Committee noted that most of the recommendations in Annex II of the document were already being addressed by the relevant Codex Committees (Recommendations 1, 3, 5, 7, 10, 15, 20) or by FAO/WHO (Recommendations 2, 9, 13, 19). Others (Recommendations 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 21) would need to be examined in relation with the discussion of the Medium Term Plan (Agenda Item 6) and/or by the Codex Regional Coordinating Committees. In relation to Recommendation 5, the Committee recommended that FAO/WHO consider holding special workshops on the issue of "precaution" prior to the future sessions of the Codex Coordinating Committees to facilitate the debate on this subject at the Committee on General Principles.

26. The Executive Committee recognised the need to develop guidelines for determining equivalence of food control systems, covering not only safety but also quality and conformity.

#### **REPORT ON DEVELOPMENTS IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WORK OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION<sup>6</sup> (Agenda Item 5)**

##### Convention on Biological Diversity: Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

27. The Executive Committee noted the adoption of the Cartagena Protocol by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at their special session in Montreal, Canada in January 2000. The Executive Committee noted the adoption of this international instrument that provided rules in relation to the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology with reference to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health and that focussed on transboundary movements.

28. While noting that in general there was little overlap between the work of Codex and the content of the Protocol, the Executive Committee noted that consultations were about to begin between relevant international organizations on the need for and modalities of developing standards with regard to identification, handling, packaging and transport practices as foreseen under Article 18.3 of the Protocol (Handling, Transport, Packaging and Identification). It was of the view that linkages may exist between this work and the work being developed by the Task Force on Foods Derived from Biotechnology in relation to "traceability". It also noted that linkages may exist to FAO and WHO work on safety assessment in relation to risk assessments from a food safety point of view, as foreseen in Annex III of the Protocol.

29. The Executive Committee requested the Secretariat to be kept informed of developments in the application of the Protocol.

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<sup>6</sup> CX/EXEC 00/47/5.

### World Trade Organization (WTO)

30. The Executive Committee noted the workshops that had been undertaken or were planned to provide developing Members of the WTO with better insight into aspects of the SPS and TBT Agreements such as risk analysis; transparency and information exchange; and technical assistance. It requested be kept informed of developments in matters related to the application of these Agreements.

### Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

#### ***Biotechnology and Other Aspects of Food Safety***

31. The Executive Committee noted the activities being carried out by the OECD at the request of the G-8 Economic Summit held in Cologne, Germany in June 1999. It noted that in general the findings of the OECD were favourable to the position of the Codex Alimentarius Commission at the primary reference point for food safety recommendations to governments. It also noted that for the moment that was no immediate duplication of work, but expressed concern at the possibility of this in the future. It also noted the limited membership of the OECD and the importance of the Codex Alimentarius Commission as the international body representing world-wide interests for the protection of consumers' health and for ensuring fair practices in the food trade world-wide. The Executive Committee was informed that FAO had provided an information note to the "sherpas" of the forthcoming Economic Summit in Japan in July 2000, on the work of the Commission and FAO and WHO in relation to biotechnology and other aspects of food safety.

32. The Executive Committee requested the Codex Secretariat to monitor developments arising from the OECD reports and the G-8 Summit and report to the next session of the Executive Committee.

#### ***OECD Scheme on the Application of International Standards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables***

33. The Executive Committee noted the proposal being discussed by the OECD Scheme "that one single international grade standards setting body" be established in relation to commercial quality standards for fresh fruits and vegetables. Some Members of the Executive Committee drew attention to the long-standing work of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) in this area and the procedures for cooperation that had been established between that body and the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, but stated that recently these procedures had not been fully observed and that the views of the UNECE had not been fully taken into account. These Members suggested that the Commission should delegate the work of establishing commercial grade standards for these products to the UNECE and/or OECD. Other Members of the Executive Committee drew attention to the international nature of Codex work and the need for truly world-wide standards with input from a full world-wide membership. They stated that the lead role should be with the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables, and that duplication should be avoided.

34. The Executive Committee requested the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables to discuss the implications of the OECD proposal in the light of its Terms of Reference and its cooperative arrangements with the UNECE.

### International Organization for Standardization (ISO)

#### ***ISO/DIS 5162.2: Guidance for the Application of ISO 9001 and 9002 in the Food Industry***

35. The Executive Committee noted that this work was being undertaken by ISO with inputs from the Codex Secretariat and the Secretariat of the Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems and expressed its appreciation of the cooperation. It also supported the approach of providing guidance for the integration of HACCP principles into ISO 9000 quality management texts for the food industry as a means of assisting the food industry,

especially small and medium sized businesses, in applying HACCP effectively. It requested that this work be reported to the Committee on Food Hygiene and the Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems to ensure appropriate coordination.

#### **PREPARATION OF MEDIUM TERM PLAN 2003-2007 (Agenda Item 6)<sup>7</sup>**

36. The Executive Committee noted that the 23rd Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission had agreed to prepare the subsequent Medium-Term Plan for 2003-2007 to be initiated rapidly for consideration by its Session and that a Circular Letter (CL 2000/3-GEN) had been sent to Member governments subsequently. In view of the very limited response to the Circular Letter, the Executive Committee discussed which elements of the current Medium-Term Plan might be extended into the next period 2003-2007 and considered how the Medium-Term Plan could be developed further in time to be submitted to the Commission.

37. The Executive Committee was of the opinion that the Medium-Term Plans of the Parent Organizations (FAO's Strategic Framework and the Strategic Plan of WHO), the recommendations of FAO Melbourne Conference, and elements of the Chairperson's Action Plan should be incorporated into the Medium-Term Plan. It noted that many studies had been undertaken in the recent past on food standards and particularly food safety issues and therefore agreed to consider issues arising from Cartagena Protocol, WTO/SPS/TBT, EC White Paper of Food Safety, OIE and the OECD reports referred to under Item 5 above. It stated that issues regarding food safety and consumer protection would need to be emphasized.

38. The Executive Committee noted the need to complete on-going work included in the current Medium-Term Plan and requested all Codex Committees to assess the progress of their work within this framework so that only a few remaining areas would need to be carried forward to the next period. It also recognized the need for a streamlined coordination between Codex Committees both horizontally and vertically. Better coordination between Regional Coordinating Committees and other Codex Committees was also raised.

39. The Executive Committee also drew attention to the need for the Commission to fulfil its mandate in relation to fair trade practices and product quality.

40. The Executive Committee stressed that the development of the next Medium Term Plan should be based on the premise that certain issues would be concluded by the end of the current planning period. These included development of risk analysis principles, application of precautionary principles or approaches and other legitimate factors in risk management, and principles for microbiological risk assessment. Elements that might be considered for further consideration included guidelines for risk communication, follow-up work on foods derived from biotechnology, traceability, health claims, meat hygiene and inspection. Several Members expressed the view that the Medium Term-Plan should be developed as part of a broader vision of strategic planning.

41. The Executive Committee agreed that all these issues and areas should be considered as the basis for building Medium-Term Plan and invited a small group consisting of the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons together with the Secretariat to prepare a draft of the Medium-Term Plan 2003-2007 and develop a strategic statement of the Commission's vision for the future. It also decided to request the opinions of Regional Coordinating Committees. The Executive Committee agreed that the drafts of these documents should be made available for consideration and discussion by the next session of the Commission.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMISSION'S PROGRAMME OF WORK (Agenda Item 7)**

### Implementation of Decisions taken by the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission<sup>8</sup>

42. The Executive Committee noted the progress made in implementing the general decisions of the Commission as reported in the working paper. In relation to the implementation of the decisions in respect of risk analysis, the decisions of Executive Committee are presented in Appendix II of the present report. The Executive Committee clarified that in this table, reference to "relevant Committees" meant those Committees that make recommendations on risk management measures based on risk assessments: at the moment these Committees include the Committees on Food Hygiene, Food Additives and Contaminants, Pesticide Residues, Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods, and Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (on some matters), and the *ad hoc* Task Forces on Foods derived from Biotechnology and Animal Feeding.

### Consideration of New Work Proposals at Step 1 of the Procedure<sup>9</sup>

43. The Executive Committee considered proposals for new work at Step 1 of the Procedure: proposals for new work under the Accelerated Procedure and proposals for the discontinuation of previously-approved individual work items. The decisions of the Executive Committee are tabulated in Appendix III to this report.

44. In addition to the comments tabulated under each proposal, the Executive Committee made the general observation that justification for new work in terms of the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities<sup>10</sup> should be well documented when making such proposals. It also noted the practice in some Committees of developing discussion papers or positions papers that explored the merits of proceeding with new work proposals, and encouraged this practice provided that it was not being used as a substitute for taking decisions.

45. The Executive Committee noted the concern expressed by the Representative of Asia on the use of the term "filled milk"<sup>11</sup> which was not allowed under the Codex General Standard for the Use of Dairy Terms and therefore could cause problems in trade in such products. The Executive Committee requested the next session of the Committee on Milk and Milk Products to re-examine the matter.

46. The Executive Committee welcomed the proposal that the Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene be reactivated in order to revise the existing codes previously developed by this Committee. It noted that the Committee had been adjourned *sine die* since 1993 and that since that time there had been significant developments that now had to be taken into account including the revision of the three basic texts on food hygiene.<sup>12</sup> The Executive Committee strongly recommended that the work and Terms of Reference of the Committee be expanded to include reference to poultry. It was proposed that consideration could also be given to revision of the Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat and Poultry Products pending advice from the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene. The Representative of WHO stated that the Committee on Meat Hygiene would need to interact directly with the Committee on Food Hygiene in order to include

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<sup>8</sup> CX/EXEC 00/47/7.

<sup>9</sup> CX/EXEC 00/47/8; CX/EXEC 00/47/8-Add.1; CX/EXEC 00/47/8-Add.2.

<sup>10</sup> Procedural Manual, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2000, pages 66-67.

<sup>11</sup> "Filled milk" is a term used in some countries for products in which milk fat is substituted by vegetable fat.

<sup>12</sup> Recommended International Code of Practice - General Principles of Food Hygiene; Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point System and Guidelines for its Application; Principles for the Establishment and Application of Microbiological Criteria for Foods.

considerations of risk analysis in its work. It noted the proposal to hold the next session of the Committee in late 2001 or early 2002, and also noted the concern of some Members that the session should be held in conjunction with another Codex meeting in the region so as to reduce travel costs for participants.

47. The Executive Committee noted a proposal from the Region of Asia to commence work in the area of novel foods (other than from biotechnology), functional foods, and foods that also were considered to be at the food/drug interface. It recommended that a detailed proposal based on the Criteria for New Work Priorities be prepared for circulation to governments and consideration by the Commission.

#### Consideration of Proposed Draft Standards and Related Texts at Step 5<sup>13</sup>

48. The Decisions of the Executive Committee are tabulated in Appendix IV of this report.

49. In approving the advancement of the Proposed Draft Standards submitted by two Committees that had been working through correspondence, the Executive Committee noted the necessity of immediate consultations with governments and interested international organizations at Step 6 of the procedure and the early publication of the final Draft Standards at Step 8 for consideration by all Members of the Commission and interested parties well in advance of the next Commission session.

#### Matters Arising from Codex Committees<sup>14</sup>

##### ***Committee on Milk and Milk Products<sup>15</sup>***

50. The Executive Committee noted that the matter of heat treatment definitions had been transferred to the work programme of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene.

##### ***Committee on Food Hygiene***

51. The Committee requested the advice of the Executive Committee on how to ensure coordination of work in relation to antimicrobial resistant bacteria in foods.<sup>16</sup> It noted that other interested Committees may be Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods and the Task Force on Animal Feeding. The Executive Committee noted that the main question was whether or not the question of anti-microbial resistance fell within the mandate of the Committee on Food Hygiene and if so, to what extent. It agreed that the development of a risk profile would assist in this determination and also in determining the extent to which the subject falls within the terms of reference of other Committees. In the absence of a risk profile, there is no reason to assume a necessity for coordination. The Executive Committee informed the relevant Committees/Task Force accordingly.

##### ***Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants: Risk Analysis Principles***

52. The Committee had asked for clarification of the status of a discussion paper entitled Risk Analysis Principles for Food Additives and Contaminants in the context of a uniform approach to the application of risk analysis in different committees.<sup>17</sup> The Executive Committee noted that the origin of this work was the recommendation of the 1991 FAO/WHO Conference on Food

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<sup>13</sup> CX/EXEC 00/47/9; CX/EXEC 00/47/9-Corr. (English only); CX/EXEC 00/47/8-Add.1; CX/EXEC 00/47/9-Add.2 (Comments of Denmark, Czech Republic, Brazil); CX/EXEC 00/47/9-Add.3 (Comments of Malaysia, Canada); CRD.1

<sup>14</sup> CX/EXEC 00/47/10.

<sup>15</sup> ALINORM 01/11, paras. 108-109.

<sup>16</sup> ALINORM 01/13, para 132.

<sup>17</sup> ALINORM 01/12, para 52.

Standards, Chemicals in Food and Food Trade the "the CAC and the relevant Codex Committees responsible for the development of standards, codes of practice or guidelines concerned with the protection of human health should make explicit the methods they have used to assess risk".<sup>18</sup> This recommendation was endorsed by the 19th Session of the Commission (1991).<sup>19</sup>

53. The Executive Committee noted that general principles for risk analysis were being finalized by the Committee on General Principles and there was no need for the Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants to duplicate this work. It was expected that the discussion of risk analysis by the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission would conclude the mandate established by the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission for the Commission and its subsidiary bodies to make explicit their risk methodologies. The Executive Committee was therefore of the opinion that the matter was urgent and requested the Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants to complete the report on the scientific basis used in risk analysis of food additives and contaminants as soon as possible.

***Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants: Codes of Practice***

54. The Committee had requested the Executive Committee to provide advice whether codes of practice on source directed measures fall within the Committee's terms of reference.<sup>20</sup>

55. Noting the Opinion of the FAO and WHO Legal Counsels transmitted to the 6th Session of the Commission (1969) and the Terms of Reference of the Committees on Food Additives and Contaminants and on Food Hygiene, the Executive Committee expressed the view that the matter fell within the Terms of Reference of the Committee as well as within the Terms of Reference of the Committee on Food Hygiene.

***Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants: "Other legitimate factors"***

56. The Committee had asked the Executive Committee to clarify the current status of the consideration of "other legitimate factors" within Codex with a view towards providing advice on a uniform approach to the matter and is considering the inclusion of a separate Annex concerning "other legitimate factors" in the Discussion Paper on the Application of Risk Analysis Principles for Food Additives and Contaminants.<sup>21</sup> The Executive Committee noted that the matter of "other legitimate factors" was under consideration by the Committee on General Principles at the request of the Commission. The Committee on General Principles had requested relevant Codex Committees to provide examples of other legitimate factors taken into account in their decision-making processes so as to facilitate the general debate in the Committee on General Principles on other legitimate factors.<sup>22</sup> The Executive Committee confirmed that responsibility for a system-wide approach to the consideration of "other legitimate factors" rested with the Committee on General Principles and that no further action in this matter should be taken by the Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants (or any other Committee) at the moment.

**DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE 24<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (AGENDA ITEM 8)<sup>23</sup>**

57. The Executive Committee discussed the draft Provisional Agenda prepared by the Secretariat and agreed to amend the following amendments ;

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<sup>18</sup> Report of the FAO/WHO Conference on Food Standards, Chemicals in Food and Food Trade, ALICOM 91/22, para. 210, FAO/WHO, Rome, 1991.

<sup>19</sup> ALINORM 91/40, para.78.

<sup>20</sup> ALINORM 01/12, para 113.

<sup>21</sup> ALINORM 01/13, para. 146.

<sup>22</sup> ALINORM 99/33A, para. 76.

<sup>23</sup> CX/EXEC 00/47/11

- Item 5: Report by the Secretariat on relations between the Codex Alimentarius Commission and international **inter-governmental and** non-governmental organizations
- Item 7 : Consideration of **Draft Strategic Framework**, Medium Term Plan 2003-2007, **and Action Plan**
- Item 11: Matters arising from reports of Codex Committees **and Task Forces**

58. The Executive Committee recommended that the draft Provisional Agenda as amended be submitted for consideration by the Directors-General of FAO and WHO.

## **OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 9)**

### Reactivation of the Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene

59. It was noted that this matter had been discussed under Item 7(b) of the Provisional Agenda.

### Coordination between Committees: Handling of Work in a Sequential Manner

60. The Representative of North America raised the problem of the progression of work in one committee when consultation with another committee was required and the frequency of meetings of these committees was different. The work being undertaken on certain high priority items by the Committee on Food Labelling and the Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses was cited as an example. In this case, the former Committee met on an annual basis and the latter met at 18 month or longer intervals.

61. The Executive Committee recommended that in this particular case, consideration should be given to annual meetings of both Committees, with reasonable intervals between meetings so as to allow consideration of the information that was being exchanged between the two Committees. This could be followed at least until such time as the common work was concluded. The Committees might give consideration, if required, to a special joint session to discuss specific issues.

### Consideration of the Chairperson's Action Plan

62. The Executive Committee expressed unanimous appreciation of the initiative of the Chairperson in drawing up an Action Plan to address many of the issues facing the Commission in its desire to improve efficiency, timeliness and responsiveness, and ensure inclusiveness of participation and transparency of operations, thereby giving the work of the Commission higher international credibility and relevancy.

63. In discussing the Action Plan, the Executive Committee highlighted the following points under the relevant sections.

### ***Codex Alimentarius Commission Meetings***

64. There was general agreement that the Commission should meet on an annual basis, as provided for in the Rules of Procedure. Some Members questioned the proposal to divide the annual sessions between policy issues and standards issues, stating that the Commission should always give attention to the adoption of standards. The Executive Committee considered the fact that annual meetings of committees would pose additional burdens on developing countries and the costs and benefits of such a decision would have to be taken into account.

65. The Executive Committee noted that the question of the abolition of the Executive Committee was under discussion by the Committee on General Principles. It further noted that the status of the Executive Committee was guaranteed under Article 6 of the Statutes and its

composition and function were governed by the Rules of Procedure. It recommended that the Secretariat in preparing its paper for the Committee on General Principles consider these facts as well as all available options in regard to abolition or possible changes in the composition and responsibilities of the Executive Committee should it be retained. The proposal to replace the Executive Committee by a "Board" based on the Chairmanship of the various Codex Committees was discouraged by the Executive Committee in view of the regional biases that would be established in such a proposal contrary to the spirit of Article 6 of the Statutes. Several Members of the Executive Committee expressed concern at the proposed participation of international non-governmental organizations in the proposed "Board" on the basis that the Commission was an intergovernmental body.

66. It was further proposed that the Chairpersons of Codex Committees and Task Forces and the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission should meet at the time of each Commission session to improve coordination between committees.

#### ***Leadership of Codex General, Commodity and Regional Committees***

67. The Executive Committee expressed strong interest in the proposal to appoint Vice-Chairpersons for each of the Codex Committees, but noted that there would need to be careful consideration given to their status under the Rules of Procedure. It encouraged further development of this proposal.

#### ***Trust Fund to Assist Developing Country Participation***

68. There was general support for the Chairperson's proposal, but it was considered that careful attention would need to be paid to the operation and management of such a fund to ensure its financial probity and the impartiality of operation. Several Members stressed that the first priority should be for developing countries' participation in the work of Codex at the Committee level, rather than at Commission level or at the level of the Executive Committee or any body that might replace it.

#### ***Increased Use of the Internet***

69. While welcoming the Chairperson's proposals in this area, several Members raised the problem of access to the Internet in many developing countries, either through the lack of computers available to Codex Contact Points or adequate access to internet service providers.

#### ***Expert Advisory Bodies***

70. The Executive Committee noted with interest the Chair's proposal that a single Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Safety be established with specialist panels of experts on areas on the Commission's interests such as food additives, contaminants, microbiological risk assessment, etc. Noting that much progress had been made in the transparency of the selection process for FAO/WHO experts, the Executive Committee was of the opinion that this could further improve the situation. Nevertheless, the Executive Committee noted that the issue was a matter for consideration by the Directors-General of FAO and WHO, and not by the Commission.

#### ***Follow-up Action***

71. The Executive Committee noted that it had recommended that elements of the Chairperson's Action Plan be incorporated into the Medium Term Plan 2003-2007, as appropriate. However, since the Action Plan contained other issues of a more immediate nature, it agreed that it should be revised in the light of the above discussion and circulated to governments for comments as well as to the Regional Coordinating Committees for their input.

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## APPENDIX II

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**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS  
CONCERNING RISK ANALYSIS**


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The Executive Committee made the following decisions to implement the Commission's recommendations on risk analysis:

Recommendation	Implementation
Programmes that contribute to risk analysis should have high priority;	This should be taken up in the context of Agenda Item 6: Preparation of the Medium-Term Plan 2003-2007.
Relevant Codex Committees should continue to develop and to apply risk analysis principles and methodologies appropriate to their specific mandates within the framework of the Action Plan and report their progress to the Commission on a regular basis;	Noted: On-going.
Proposals for new or amended definitions for use within the framework of risk analysis, as appropriate, should be considered by the Codex Committee on General Principles;	Noted: On-going.
To overcome confusion about the usage of the terms "risk analysis" and "hazard analysis", the Commission should reiterate its definitions for these concepts and explain how they apply in practice;	The Executive Committee referred this matter to the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene for a clear statement of the difference between the two terms and to the Committee on General Principles for subsequent action.
The Commission should continue and expand its efforts to increase the participation of those national governments and NGOs that are members or observers but that are not presently active participants in Codex matters;	The Executive Committee noted that the issue was relevant to all Codex work and not only to risk analysis and drew the attention of the countries concerned to the Commission's recommendation.
Relevant Codex committees should consider developing quality criteria for data used for risk assessment. To the extent possible such criteria should be consistent with one another, taking into account the technical differences in the disciplines covered;	The Executive Committee referred these recommendations to the Committees concerned (see also para. 42 of the report).
Relevant Codex committees should consider the acute aspects of dietary exposure to chemicals in food;	

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Recommendation	Implementation
<p>Recognizing that primary production in developing countries is largely through small and medium enterprises, risk assessment should be based on global data, including that from developing countries. This data should particularly include epidemiological surveillance data and exposure studies;</p>	
<p>Risk management should take into account the economic consequences and the feasibility of risk management options in developing countries. Risk Management should also recognize the need for flexibility in the establishment of standards, guidelines and other recommendations, consistent with the protection of consumers' health.</p>	<p>The Executive Committee referred this recommendation to the Codex Committee on General Principles for consideration in relation to the development of appropriate texts for inclusion in the Procedural Manual.</p>

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## APPENDIX III

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**PROPOSALS FOR NEW WORK (STEP 1), ACCELERATED NEW WORK AND DISCONTINUATION OF WORK**


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**PROPOSALS FOR NEW WORK (STEP 1)**


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<b>Item</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
1.	Proposed Draft Standard for Instant Noodles	CCASIA/ CCCPL	Approved. The draft standard should be as broad as possible, non-prescriptive and cover a world-wide range of products. Initial development to be undertaken by CCASIA and final development through the CCCPL by correspondence.
2.	Proposed Draft Standard for Evaporated Skimmed Milk with Vegetable Fat (tentative title proposed by the CCMMP) Proposed Draft Standard for Evaporated Filled Milk (title proposed by the CCASIA)	CCMMP	Approved. Development of draft standard by CCMMP. Issues surrounding the name of the food need to be addressed.
3.	Proposed Draft Standard for Sweetened Condensed Skimmed Milk with Vegetable Fat (tentative title proposed by the CCMMP) Proposed Draft Standard for Sweetened Condensed Filled Milks (title proposed by the CCASIA)	CCMMP	Approved. Development of draft standard by CCMMP. Issues surrounding the name of the food need to be addressed.
4.	Proposed Draft Standard for Skimmed Milk Powder with Vegetable Fat (tentative title proposed by the CCMMP) Proposed Draft Standard for Filled Milk Powders (title proposed by the CCASIA)	CCMMP	Approved. Development of draft standard by CCMMP. Issues surrounding the name of the food need to be addressed.
5.	Proposed Draft Amendment to the Codex Group Standard for Cheeses in Brine (Sampling)	CCMMP	Approved
6.	Proposed Draft Amendment to the Codex General Standard for Cheese (Appendix on cheese rind, surface and coatings)	CCMMP	Approved
7.	Standard for Unifloral Honey	CX/S	Not approved. More adequate justification required (see para 44.)

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<b>Item</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
8.	Completion of Part two of the Standard for Honey covering industrial uses	CX/S	Not approved. More adequate justification required (see para 44.) including the necessity to develop a standard for industrial uses, which is not usual practice in Codex.
9.	Proposed Draft Maximum Residue Limits for Certain Veterinary Drugs in Foods  cefuroxime; pirlimycin; amoxicillin (tentative); amprolium (tentative); apramycin (tentative); clorsulon (tentative); coumafos (tentative); erythromycin (tentative); florfenicol (tentative); furosemide (tentative); nitroxylnil (tentative); novobiocin (tentative); oxyclozanide (tentative); oxytocin (tentative); piperazine (tentative); trimethprim (tentative)	CCRVDF	Approved
10.	General principle for risk analysis of foods derived from biotechnology (precise title still to be determined)	CX/FBT	Approved
11.	Specific guidance on the risk assessment of foods derived from biotechnology (precise title still to be determined)	CX/FBT	Approved
12.	List of available analytical methods including those for the detection or identification of foods or food ingredients derived from biotechnology	CX/FBT	Approved
13.	Guidelines on the Judgement of Equivalence of Sanitary Measures Associated with Food Inspection and Certification Systems	CCFICS	Approved. The Executive Committee indicated that the document should emphasize systems requirements.
14.	Proposed Draft Revision of the Recommended International Code of Practice for the Operation of Irradiation Facilities Used for the Treatment of Foods	CCFAC	Approved

<b>Item</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
15.	Proposed Draft Code of Practice for the Prevention of Mycotoxin Contamination in Cereals, including Annexes on Ochratoxin A, Zearalenone and Fumonisin	CCFAC	Approved
16.	Proposed Draft Code of Practice for the Prevention of Patulin Contamination in Apple Juice and Apple Juice Ingredients in Other Beverages	CCFAC	Approved
17.	Proposed Draft Code of Practice for Source Directed Measures to Reduce Dioxin Contamination of Foods	CCFAC	Approved
18.	Revision of the Code of Practice for the Processing and Handling of Quick Frozen Foods (CAC/RCP 8-1976)	CCPFV	Approved. Draft to be prepared by the International Institute of Refrigeration with final review by the CCPFV.
19.	Proposed Draft Amendment to the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods: Quantitative Declaration of Ingredients	CCFL	Approved
20.	Proposed Draft Amendments to the Guidelines on Good Laboratory Practice in Pesticide Residue Analysis	CCPR	Approved
21.	Proposed Draft Amendments to the Introduction Section of the Recommended methods of Analysis for Pesticide Residues	CCPR	Approved
22.	Certificate of Inspection for Fish	CCFFP	Previously approved by the 45th Session of the Executive Committee but not reported.

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**PROPOSALS FOR NEW WORK UNDER THE ACCELERATED PROCEDURE**

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ITEM	PROPOSAL	COMMITTEE	STATUS
1.	Proposed Draft Amendments to the Glossary of Terms and Definitions (Definitions muscle, fat, milk and egg)	CCRVDF	Approved
2.	Proposed Draft Amendments to Table 3 of the Codex General Standard for Food Additives	CCFAC	Approved
3.	Proposed Draft Amendments to the Guidelines for the Production, Processing, Labelling and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods: Substances used for Soil Conditioning and Fertilization	CCFL	Approved
4.	Proposed Draft Amendments to Codex Classification of Foods and Animal Feeds (Definitions of meat, mammalian fats, poultry fats and milks)	CCPR	Approved

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**PROPOSALS FOR THE DISCONTINUATION OF WORK**

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ITEM	PROPOSAL	COMMITTEE	STATUS
1.	Proposed Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Aqueous Coconut Products	CCASIA	Endorsed
2.	Proposed Draft Definitions for Heat Treatments	CCMMP	Endorsed
3.	Proposed Draft Guidelines for the use of the Term "Vegetarian"	CCFL	Endorsed

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## APPENDIX IV

## CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED DRAFT STANDARDS AND RELATED TEXTS AT STEP 5

ITEM	TITLE	COMMITTEE	REFERENCE	STATUS
1.	Proposed Draft Standard for Aqueous Coconut Products	CCASIA	ALINORM 01/15: Appendix II	Advanced to Step 6
2.	Proposed Draft Revised Standard for Creams, Whipped Creams and Fermented Creams	CCMMP	ALINORM 01/11: Appendix VI	Advanced to Step 6
3.	Proposed Draft Revised Standard for Fermented Milks	CCMMP	ALINORM 01/11: Appendix VII	Advanced to Step 6
4.	Proposed Draft Revised Standard for Whey Powders	CCMMP	ALINORM 01/11: Appendix VIII	Advanced to Step 6
5.	Proposed Draft Maximum Residue Limits for: Clenbuterol in cattle milk: Neomycin in liver, kidney and milk of cattle Phoxim in tissues of cattle, pig, sheep and goat Porcine somatotropin in tissues of pig Thiamphenicol in tissues of pig and fish	CCRVDF	ALINORM 01/31: Appendix V	Advanced to Step 6  The Executive Committee noted that further advancement of the draft MRL for Porcine Somatotropin would depend on the outcome of the discussion of "other legitimate factors" by the CCGP.
6.	Proposed Draft Guidelines for Generic Official Certificate Formats and the Production and Issuance of Certificates	CCFICS	ALINORM 01/30, paras. 48-49 and Appendix II	Advanced to Step 6
7.	Proposed Draft Food Additive Provisions in Table 1 of the General Standard for Food Additives	CCFAC	ALINORM 01/12, Appendix V	Advanced to Step 6
8.	Proposed Draft Revisions to the International Numbering System for Food Additives	CCFAC	ALINORM 01/12, Appendix VII	Advanced to Step 6
9.	Proposed Draft Code of Practice for Source Directed Measures to Reduce Contamination of Food with Chemicals	CCFAC	ALINORM 01/12, Appendix XVIII	Advanced to Step 6

ITEM	TITLE	COMMITTEE	REFERENCE	STATUS
10.	Proposed Draft Revision to the Standard for Food Grade Salt – Packaging, Transportation and Storage	CCFAC	ALINORM 01/12, Appendix XIV	Advanced to Step 6
11.	Proposed Draft Revised Codex Standard for Bouillons and Consommés	CCSB	ALINORM 01/29 Appendix I	Advanced to Step 6 (see also para. 49)
12.	Proposed Draft Revised Codex Standard for Wheat Protein Products	CCVP	ALINORM 01/37 Appendix I	Advanced to Step 6 (see also para. 49)