

INTRODUCTION

1. The FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committee for Europe held its 33rd session (CCEURO33) in Berlin, Germany, from 27 to 31 May 2024, at the kind invitation of the Government of Germany. Anne Beutling, Deputy Head of Division, for International Organizations of Food and Agriculture and Codex Alimentarius, Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, chaired the Session, which was attended by 32 Member countries and one Member Organization from the European region, four Member countries from outside the Region, two Observer organizations, and Representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The list of participants is contained in Appendix I.

OPENING

2. Silvia Bender, State Secretary, Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, opened the meeting on behalf of the Government of Germany, welcoming the participants and highlighting the priorities of Germany as coordinator for Europe : (i) reduce barriers to active participation in Codex work; (ii) raise awareness of the important role of Codex and food safety in general – in the transition towards sustainable food systems; and (iii) promote wide application of Codex standards in key areas. The State Secretary further stressed that the climate crisis, the loss of biological diversity, and the rise in environmental pollution cannot be considered separately from food safety management as well as food production and trade.
3. Mary Kenny, Food Safety and Consumer Protection Officer, FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU) and Peter Sousa Hoejskov, Technical Officer for Food Safety and Zoonotic Diseases, WHO Regional Office for Europe, delivered opening speeches on behalf of FAO and WHO, respectively.
4. The meeting was also addressed by Steve Wearne, Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) and Hilde Kruse, Senior Food Standards Officer, Codex Secretariat.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda Item 1)¹

5. CCEURO33 adopted the Provisional Agenda as the Agenda for the Session.
6. CCEURO33 further agreed to establish an In-session Working Group (IWG), open to all Members and Observers, chaired by the United Kingdom and working in English and Russian, to prioritize goals and define related regional activities for implementation between 2024-2025 based on Appendix II of CX/EURO 24/33/7 (agenda Item 6).

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: ONE HEALTH APPROACH AND FOOD SAFETY – CHALLENGES AND POTENTIALS (Agenda Item 2)²

7. The Representative of FAO, speaking on behalf of FAO and WHO, introduced the item, recalling the role of the keynote address to stimulate discussion and information sharing on a priority topic of interest to the region related to food safety and Codex work.
8. The keynote address was delivered by Martin Cormican, Professor of Bacteriology, School of Medicine and Director of the National Microbiology Reference Laboratory at the University of Galway, on the topic: “One Health Approach and Food Safety – Challenges and Potential”.
9. The keynote speaker gave an overview of the topic and emphasised the following points:
 - a. The health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants, and the wider environment were closely linked and inter-dependent;
 - b. Adopting the One Health approach would mean to sustainably optimize the health of people, animals and ecosystems, challenging us to think beyond one species or sector;
 - c. When shaping One Health policies, it was critical to optimize resources and focus on the areas where the invested efforts make the most impact, recognizing when a point of diminishing returns was met;
 - d. Stressed the importance of cross-ministerial actions, and collaboration to maximize synergies and balance trade-offs, recognizing that this was often hard to achieve as Ministries were frequently mandated to address certain policies and sectors which encouraged siloed approaches;
 - e. Advocated that the One Health approach should become a core value, rather than invoking token or ad hoc actions, so that decisions contributed to meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs;

¹ CX/EURO 24/33/1; CRD01

² CX/EURO 24/33/2

- f. Encouraged human, animal and environmental health sectors to report evidence and data in a more integrated way, for example on antimicrobial use, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and zoonotic disease surveillance; and
- g. Reminded that communication between different authorities, stakeholders and countries in the region was key to successfully implement the One Health approach.

Discussion

10. Members welcomed the keynote address and confirmed its relevance and importance to food safety and the current and future work of Codex.
11. Members shared different national and regional efforts and experiences in embedding the One Health approach into food safety policy making and network building. This included experiences on using the One Health approach to overcoming institutional barriers, developing national action plans, establishing or enhancing One Health coordination mechanisms, sharing data, and facilitating communication between sectors.
12. Members stressed the need for tailored approaches to accommodate country needs, and expressed interest in sharing experiences and being informed of available tools for operationalizing the One Health approach.
13. Members highlighted that while science played a key role in evidence-based food safety policy making, policies encompassed value judgements. Members also underlined that robust One Health policies rely on good communication and trust among stakeholders.
14. Recognizing the complexity of One Health and sustainability, the approach and evidence on true cost accounting in the 2023 FAO State of Food and Agriculture³ was referred to as a source for advocating and informing actions.
15. Members acknowledged the One Health Joint Plan of Action⁴ and the associated implementation guide by the Quadripartite (FAO, UNEP, WOA and WHO) and the usefulness of these for implementing the One Health approach at country level.
16. Members suggested that Codex include One Health among its core values and integrate it in the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031. In moving forward, it was suggested that Codex systematically integrate One Health considerations when considering new work proposals.
17. The keynote speaker stressed the importance of using Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) and Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALYs) to measure the burden of foodborne disease and the impact of interventions, encouraging food safety experts to communicate this more efficiently to policy makers to be better understood.
18. The keynote speaker also stressed the importance of education to achieving shifts in mindsets and breaking silos to mainstream the One Health approach.
19. The Representative of WHO encouraged Member countries in the European region to utilize existing guidance to operationalize the One Health approach at country level and to strengthen multisectoral coordination mechanisms. The Representative mentioned the One Health Joint Plan of Action, the tripartite zoonoses guide, and the operational tools to strengthen multisectoral coordination mechanisms as useful references for Member countries when taking action.
20. The Representative from FAO referred to the FAO/WHO Food Control System Assessment Tool to help countries understand roles of different organizations and collect evidence, which can support strengthening the One Health approach in managing food safety risks. Members were encouraged to strengthen food safety emergency response plans through a One Health approach, generate quality data for cross-sectoral surveillance and use existing mechanisms to coordinate efforts where feasible.
21. The Representatives of FAO and WHO thanked the keynote speaker for the comprehensive and inspiring speech. The Representatives noted the progress made and the many good examples provided, and encouraged countries to build on these to continue applying the One Health approach in food safety work.

Conclusion

22. CCEURO33:
 - i. noted the information and the feedback provided during the discussion in particular on recognizing the importance of the One Health approach to reduce food safety risks, and appreciated the examples provided of ongoing work;

³ The State of Food and Agriculture 2023

⁴ <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240059139>

- ii. encouraged countries to further integrate the One Health approach to address food safety issues, recognizing that this requires trust building, enabling policies, and steps to overcome institutional barriers;
- iii. encouraged countries to strengthen multisectoral and multi-disciplinary work, including integrated surveillance and cross-sectoral data sharing;
- iv. encouraged the food safety community to be active in coordination mechanisms and communication with other professionals within their own countries and among countries;
- v. recognized the commitment of Members in the region as well as FAO and WHO to increasingly build capacity for operationalizing the One Health approach at country, regional and international level; and
- vi. requested CAC to address the need to include the One Health approach in the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 and to strengthen its application within Codex work, particularly in the case of proposals for new work.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES (Agenda Item 3)⁵

- 23. The Codex Secretariat provided a summary of the matters for information of direct relevance to CCEURO, noting that the work on the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 would be addressed separately under agenda item 7.
- 24. The Chairperson encouraged Members to actively contribute to the discussion in CCEXEC and CAC, and to note the encouragement to submit discussion papers that concern new work proposals on new food sources and production system (NFPS) using existing working mechanisms in Codex.
- 25. Referring to the request of CCEURO32 and noting that the Codex Secretariat would present a document at CAC47 related to webcasting of CCEXEC, Members expressed the view that webcasting of CCEXEC would be beneficial as it would increase transparency and strengthen their confidence in Codex management. Access to discussions on the Codex Strategic Plan and on new work proposals coming directly to CCEXEC would be of special interest to Members and help preparations for the discussions at the Commission. Furthermore, webcasting CCEXEC would give Members insight in the discussions in CCEXEC and the roles and responsibilities of those present, thereby helping to engage and train future CCEXEC Members. Webcasting of CCEXEC could also facilitate inputs and submission of comments to the Coordinator on matters discussed in CCEXEC.

Conclusion

- 26. CCEURO33:
 - i. noted the information provided in the working document and by the Secretariat during the session;
 - ii. reiterated the request of CCEURO32 that the Codex Secretariat further explore the possibility of webcasting CCEXEC;
 - iii. encouraged Members to actively contribute to the discussions in CCEXEC and CAC; and
 - iv. noted the encouragement by CAC46 to submit discussion papers or new work proposals on NFPS using existing mechanisms.

CODEX WORK RELEVANT TO THE REGION (Agenda Item 4)⁶

- 27. The Regional Coordinator introduced the agenda item and presented the key issues related to Codex work of relevance to the European region. Members concurred with the issues identified and made the following additional comments and observations.

Discussion

- 28. Members confirmed that so far, they were not aware of examples of the application of the draft guidance on the application of the Statements of Principle concerning the role of science in the Codex decision-making process and the extent to which other factors are taken into account.
- 29. In regard to AMR, Members reported on their efforts to develop capacities of stakeholders in different sectors to implement Codex texts on AMR and reduce the use of antimicrobial agents in food production. It was noted that the European Council in June 2023 had adopted the “Recommendation on stepping up EU actions to combat antimicrobial resistance in a One Health approach”, which was aligned with the *Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance* (CXC 61-2005), and that on 26 September 2024,

⁵ CX/EURO 24/33/3

⁶ CX/EURO 24/33/4

- the United Nations General Assembly will hold a High-level meeting on AMR providing another opportunity to discuss AMR. Members welcomed the Codex survey on the use and impact of Codex texts 2024, which will include the *Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance* (CXC 61-2021).
30. As regards the One Health approach, Members welcomed the reference to its importance in the draft Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 and during recent discussions in the development of new Codex texts such as the CCFH work on guidelines for food hygiene control measures in traditional markets for food. One Member proposed that Codex standards include provisions on food waste to consider its impact on the environment.
 31. In regard to webcasting, Members requested further information on the impact on participation and expressed the need for clarifying procedures and appropriate practices for the different meeting formats (e.g. webinars, virtual meetings of EWGs), in particular regarding registration.
 32. The Secretariat clarified that while participation in Codex sessions during the COVID-19 pandemic had increased when using virtual formats, host countries had afterwards adopted different meeting formats and that more feedback and analysis was needed to compare participation data.
 33. Members noted that the various technical committees apply different approaches in their work prioritization processes and that there was a need for guidance in this regard to enhance clarity and coherence of approaches. Members welcomed the ongoing work by the Codex Secretariat in preparing practical guidance to address the challenges related to new work and work prioritization, and suggested considering One Health in this work.
 34. Members reported on their participation in the EWG on the proposal for an amendment of the General Standard for Fruit Juices and Nectars (CXS 247-2005) under CAC. In their view, the proposed amendment represented food control challenges, and was best discussed in the frame of technical committees. A Member stated that having an EWG directly under CAC was another argument for the importance of webcasting sessions of CCEXEC.
 35. Regarding the adoption by vote of the MRLs for zilpaterol hydrochloride in cattle liver, kidney and muscle, Members noted that despite the consultations held it had been impossible to reach a consensus on these MRLs. Members suggested that Codex should refrain from developing new MRLs for growth promoters for the reasons already detailed during CAC46⁷. A Member suggested that Codex should not engage in work that had little prospect for consensus.
 36. Regarding work in the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) which will take place in a physical format with possibility of remote participation at its next session, it was noted that the United Kingdom was co-chairing the EWG on potential revisions to the *Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool within a Food Inspection and Certification System* (CXG 60-2006) and that Norway was proposing new work on "establishments listing" welcoming engagement from other Members in discussions related to this challenging topic.
 37. Regarding work in the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL), it was noted that the EU was co-chairing the EWG on sustainability labelling claims.
 38. Regarding work in the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF), it was noted that Türkiye was chairing an EWG on developing a discussion paper on the revision of the *Code of practice to prevent and reduce pyrrolizidine alkaloid contamination in food and feed* (CXC 74-2014).

Conclusion

39. CCEURO33:
 - i. Confirmed the relevance of the work items identified in CX/EURO 24/33/4;
 - ii. Noted that so far Members were not aware of examples of the application of the draft guidance on application of the Statements of Principle concerning the role of science;
 - iii. Noted the efforts of Members from the European region to take preventive action in addressing AMR in line with the One Health approach, to consider the existing Codex texts on foodborne AMR when defining and implementing their national strategies, and encouraged Members to use the 2024 survey to share further information on their endeavours;
 - iv. Welcomed the reference to the importance of the One Health approach in the draft Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 and in recent discussions in the development of new Codex texts;

⁷ REP23/CAC, Appendix IX

- v. In light of the adoption by voting on the draft MRLs for zilpaterol hydrochloride in cattle liver, kidney and muscle, recommended that Codex refrain from developing MRLs on growth promoters or agreeing to start new work on issues that are not amenable to standardization;
- vi. Noted the overall positive experience of Members from the region with webcasting and the desire to maintain and consistently implement this practice for sessions of CAC and its technical committees; the interest of Members in clarifying procedures and appropriate practices for the different meeting formats; the concern of host country secretariats from the region with respect to the uncertainty that the option of following the meeting through webcast creates for the organization of physical events; and that the Codex Secretariat would provide further information on experiences gained on different meeting formats to CCEXEC;
- vii. Noted the lessons learnt on different meeting formats and that there continued to be different preferences among Members from the region;
- viii. Noted the different work prioritization approaches applied in different Codex committees, and underlined the need for an overview and practical guidance on the way new work was prepared and prioritized in Codex as recommended by CCEXEC83 (2022) and CCEXEC85 (2023);
- ix. Noted the outcome of CCGP33 that Codex Rules of Procedure would continue to be interpreted in a manner that includes virtual sessions of CAC Subsidiary bodies and that the review of the Rules of Procedures for sessions of CAC was deferred to CCGP34 (2025);
- x. Encouraged interested Members to actively engage in the ongoing EWG on the proposal for an amendment of the *General Standard for Fruit Juices and Nectars* (CXS 247-2005) for consideration by CCEXEC87 and CAC47; and
- xi. Encouraged Members to actively engage in Codex work on issues identified in the discussion and listed in Table 1 of CX/EURO 24/33/4.

FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY ISSUES IN THE REGION (Agenda Item 5.1)⁸

- 40. The representative of WHO, on behalf of FAO and WHO, introduced the agenda item, recalling the discussion on current and emerging food safety and quality issues in the region at CCEURO32 (2022). The representative informed that the document included information about priority food safety and quality issues in the European region including emerging issues, providing a background for defining the problems and needs of the region concerning food standards and food control. The document also sought to stimulate discussions that were relevant to inform FAO and WHO capacity building and strategic guidance to countries in the region.
- 41. A technical presentation on dietary guidelines was delivered by a Nutrition Officer of the Food and Nutrition Division, FAO, who reminded that dietary guidelines were a useful resource and have a vast potential for informing policies and programmes and educating consumers on healthy diets. The role of dietary guidelines could be further enhanced with effective communication and implementation. Addressing the growing demand on integrating sustainability considerations, FAO was finalizing a new methodology for Food System-Based Dietary Guidelines (FSBDGs) that provided guidance to countries to develop evidence-based dietary guidelines integrating sustainability to both promote healthy diets and nutrition, and contribute to the transformation of food systems.
- 42. The Nutrition Officer highlighted persistent global nutrition and food systems challenges noting that since the first FAO/WHO International Conference on Nutrition in 1992, over 100 countries have developed food-based dietary guidelines. The Nutrition Officer underlined the recognized potential and need for dietary guidelines to inform policies, programmes and actions across the food system. For this purpose, FAO was developing FSBDG methodology for countries to develop and implement dietary guidelines that presented several innovative aspects. These included its anchorage in food systems and systemic thinking, guidance to make the process more scientifically robust, and guidance on integrating sustainability considerations based on a conceptual framework that combines recent FAO/WHO work on healthy diets, the FAO/WHO Sustainable healthy diets: Guiding principles⁹, and the Food systems framework¹⁰.

Discussion

- 43. Members expressed appreciation for the information provided on food safety issues. A comprehensive overview of ongoing actions in the EU and other parts of the region on food safety was highlighted. Attention was brought to three tools, for which annual reports were publicly available: i) The Rapid Alert System for Food

⁸ CX/EURO 24/33/5; CRD02 (European Union); CRD03 (United Kingdom); CRD04 (Türkiye); CRD05 (Spain)

⁹ <https://www.fao.org/policy-support/tools-and-publications/resources-details/en/c/1329630/>

¹⁰ <https://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-hlpe/publications/hlpe-15/en>

and Feed (RASFF) and the RASFF Window, which provide a tool for exchanging information on food safety events; ii) The Alert and Cooperation Network (ACN)¹¹; and iii) the EU Agri-Food Fraud Network¹², which served as a network for exchanging information across Members in a confidential manner.

44. The Chairperson reminded of the repository on food fraud and other relevant information created under CCEURO, which was available on the Codex website¹³, and encouraged Members to review the list of contact points and provide updates as necessary.
45. Members expressed appreciation for the ongoing work by FAO and WHO on the development and implementation of dietary guidelines and in promoting sustainable healthy diets.
46. Members shared information and experiences on improving nutrition and promoting healthy diets providing examples such as fiscal measures, labelling schemes, school feeding programmes, communication and health promotion initiatives.
47. Experiences in developing, updating and implementing FBDG at national levels, including targeting specific population groups, was shared. It was acknowledged that FBDG can cover a range of recommendations, including safe food practices, food waste prevention, public procurement, school feeding programmes.
48. Members reported that within recent years sustainability considerations had, to an increasing extent, been included in the development of dietary guidelines. There had been recommendations for a transition to more plant-rich diets, reduced consumption of animal source foods, and promotion of food diversity and local foods in diets.
49. While recognizing that FBDGs need to be country-specific, it was noted that there may be commonalities at sub-regional level. As useful examples to inform country approaches, Members highlighted the Mediterranean diet and guidelines of the Nordic Council of Ministers¹⁴.
50. Members also informed about challenges when updating policies and actions for healthy diets, such as finding agreements with the private sector on the implementation of regulatory measures to promote health and sustainable diets, and changing consumer behaviour.
51. Members agreed on the value of continuing to share experiences between countries in the region on the development and use of FBDG, and understanding needs of countries who were in the process of developing FBDGs.
52. Members proposed establishing an EWG to advance the work on food-based dietary guidelines in the European region.
53. Concerning the distinction between “food-based dietary guidelines” and “dietary guidelines”, the Nutrition Officer noted that worldwide most countries use the more generic term “dietary guidelines” and remarked that in the region several countries were working on developing FSDG, which were broader than FBDG, and indicated that the name of the FAO repository was being changed to “dietary guidelines”. The Nutrition Officer also explained that the new guidance on monitoring and evaluation (Step 6 of the FAO FSDGs methodology) could be used by all countries, although it would need to be adapted to specific country contexts.
54. The FAO Representative encouraged those countries in the process of developing or revising FBDGs to participate in the EWG. The Representative informed Members of the technical support on the development of FSDGs provided to Montenegro, Serbia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, which brought together policy makers and data providers from different sectors enabling a multidisciplinary approach beyond the health sector, and included analysis of available data and information on diet-related health challenges.
55. Members expressed interest in addressing sustainability in general in the context of Codex work and use of Codex standards, proposing that this topic be further discussed at CCEURO34.

Conclusion

56. CCEURO33:
 - i. noted and concurred with the priority food safety issues in the region highlighted in the document;
 - ii. encouraged Member States to develop and implement dietary guidelines using a food systems approach and integrating sustainability considerations using available guidance and tools;
 - iii. agreed to establish an EWG with support of FAO and WHO, chaired by Germany, and co-chaired by

¹¹ https://food.ec.europa.eu/safety/acn/reports-and-publications_en

¹² https://food.ec.europa.eu/safety/eu-agri-food-fraud-network_en

¹³ <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/codex-regions/cceuro/about/food-fraud/en/>

¹⁴ <https://www.norden.org/en/foodsystems>

Kazakhstan, Türkiye and Spain, with the following terms of reference (TORs):

- Scope the needs and experiences of the Members in the European region regarding the development of dietary guidelines (DGs), and inclusion of sustainability considerations therein;
- Review existing international tools; and
- Propose follow-up actions for considerations by CCEURO34, including the possible development of guidance to assist members from the region in the development of DGs including sustainability considerations and a food systems approach.

The EWG will work in English, Russian and Spanish, with the possibility to hold virtual meetings. The EWG report should be made available to the Codex Secretariat at least three months before CCEURO34.

- iv. agreed to bring to the attention of CCNFSDU44 the establishment of a CCEURO EWG on dietary guidelines; and
- v. noted a proposal¹⁵ to explore the potential for targeted work that could support Members in the region in the promotion of sustainable food systems transformation through activities linked to the development and use of Codex Standards, and agreed to consider this matter at CCEURO34.

FAO/WHO WORK IN THE REGION (Agenda Item 5.2)¹⁶

57. The Representatives of FAO and WHO informed the delegates of the ongoing work to develop regional and country capacities on food safety and quality, including work on sustainable food systems transformation, the One Health approach, AMR, nutrition, and official food control systems. Reference was also made to efforts to build capacities in effective participation in Codex through the FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund (CTF) projects, and Codex e-learning courses¹⁷. Collaboration with Members, partners and donors through FAO and WHO initiatives was gratefully acknowledged.

Discussion

58. Members welcomed the overview and expressed appreciation to FAO and WHO for the ongoing work and recognized the benefits of collaboration and technical exchange in the region. Members highlighted the following:
 - a. Encouraged FAO and WHO to continue joint activities and complementary work on the implementation of their global food safety strategies.
 - b. Recognized the success of the recent tutored course on One Health through the FAO Regional Virtual Learning Centre (20 February-15 March 2024) which brought together participants from different sectors, and encouraged FAO and WHO to continue with similar initiatives. Members were informed that the Russian version of the course would be delivered in the second half of 2024.
 - c. Looked forward to the upcoming UNGA High-Level Meeting on AMR (September 2024), which presents an opportunity to scale up the actions on AMR, and share perspectives from the European region.
 - d. Appreciated the updates from Members in the region (Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Tajikistan and upcoming in Uzbekistan) on the application of the FAO/WHO Food Control System Assessment Tool.
 - e. Proposed an exchange on experiences and lessons learned on applying the FAO/WHO Food Control System Assessment Tool considering the results helped to set strategic actions to achieve the goal of well-functioning food control systems.
 - f. Noted the development of the IFC (International Finance Corporation)/WHO Assessment Tool on the WHO Global Strategy for Food Safety.
 - g. Appreciated the successful implementation of CTF activities in the region with FAO and WHO support. Beneficiary Members shared their appreciation of the CTF to enhance their national Codex capacities through trainings, expert advice and mentoring sessions with twinning modality. Members looked forward to receiving the results of the 8th round of CTF projects, to which the last two eligible Members in the European region had submitted applications.

¹⁵ CRD03

¹⁶ CX/EURO 24/33/6

¹⁷ <https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=800>

- h. Noted the support under the regional projects, namely the FAO-Türkiye Partnership Programme that provided support for HACCP inspection in high risk food businesses, and the Russian Federation funded project on counteracting AMR in food and agriculture, which supported action plan development, trainings to specialists, and promotion of prudent use of antimicrobial agents.
- i. Appreciated the FAO and WHO technical publications on topical issues including on AMR in the food chain and innovative digital tools for emerging risks and environmental inhibitors in agrifood systems, acknowledging that they provide a great source of materials.
- j. Welcomed the upcoming regional FAO/WHO technical brief on One Health and Food Safety.

Conclusion

59. CCEURO33:

- i. noted with appreciation FAO and WHO work in the region including through the CTF, in support of the objectives of the FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme and the strengthening of food safety control systems in the region;
- ii. encouraged Members in the region to continue working with FAO and WHO on the implementation of ongoing regional and country-level activities to strengthen food control systems and the application of the One Health approach; and
- iii. noted the interest of Members in the region in sharing lessons learned on the implementation of the FAO/WHO Food Control System Assessment Tool.

CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025: IMPLEMENTATION IN THE EUROPEAN REGION (Agenda Item 6)¹⁸

- 60. The Chairperson introduced the item referring to the review of the implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and the regional communication plan as contained in the document.
- 61. Members expressed appreciation for the activities of the Coordinator for Europe, highlighting in particular the usefulness of informal virtual pre-session meetings organized in preparation of sessions of Codex meetings.
- 62. As agreed during the adoption of the agenda, an IWG, chaired by UK, was established to develop the regional implementation plan for 2024-2025.
- 63. **Discussion on regional work plan for 2024-2025**
- 64. The IWG considered the priority goals, priority objectives, activities for the period 2024-2025, responsible party and collaborators, and expected outputs by 2025 as proposed in Appendix II of CX/EURO 24/33/7 as a starting point for the discussion.
- 65. The Chairperson presented the final results as contained in Appendix II, noting the support of the Members.

Conclusion

66. CCEURO33:

- i. noted the report of the Coordinator for Europe on the implementation of the regional work plan and communications activities in 2022 and 2023;
- ii. acknowledged with appreciation the informal pre-session meetings for Codex committees that the Coordinator organises in a virtual format for Members from the region; and
- iii. agreed on the regional workplan for 2024-2025 to be implemented in support of achieving the prioritized global goals and objectives (Appendix II).

CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2031: STATUS AND NEXT STEPS (Agenda Item 7)¹⁹

- 67. The Codex Secretariat introduced the document recalling the process to develop the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031.
- 68. Members and Observers had been invited, through a circular letter (CL 2024/10-EXEC), to provide comments, on the following elements of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031: Vision; Mission; Core values; a narrative on Drivers for change; the Role of Codex; and High-level description of Codex ways of working. They were also invited to respond to questions that would help the development of the second part of the Codex Strategic Plan

¹⁸ CX/EURO 24/33/7

¹⁹ CX/EURO 24/33/8

2026-2031 as agreed at CCEXEC85²⁰. The CL was issued in January 2024 (CL 2024/10-EXEC) with a deadline of 9 April 2024.

69. CCEXEC85 had agreed that the recommendations and questions contained in the CL would be used by the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CVCs) to hold informal consultations with the Regions through the Regional Coordinators and with Observers. The purpose of the informal consultations was to encourage interaction, discussion and reflection, and to support Members and Observers in responding to the abovementioned CL. An informal consultation with Members in the European region was held on 29 February 2024. Similar consultations were held with all Codex Regions.
70. A document (CX/EXEC 24/86/4) summarizing the comments received through the CL and information gathered from the informal consultations with the regions, will be presented at CCEXEC86 as a basis for further discussion and advancement in the development of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-31, with the aim of having it approved by CAC47.

Discussion

71. Members expressed appreciation to the CVCs for the informal consultations with the regions, and requested that the following be taken into consideration by CCEXEC and CAC when further developing the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031:
- a. acknowledging the continuing momentum emanating from the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS), that there was a need to sustainably transform food systems;
 - b. reflecting in the codex vision and mission, the need to adapt Codex work to a changing global context;
 - c. including biodiversity loss and digitalization among the drivers for change;
 - d. maintaining the reference to collaboration with other international organizations, in line with the statutory purpose of Codex; and
 - e. recognizing the need for applying the One Health approach in Codex work, as already included in the FAO and WHO strategic documents.
72. The FAO Representative reminded CCEURO of the opportunity presented every two years through the Stock Taking Moments of the UNFSS 2021 and encouraged Members to work with their National Convenors, informing them of updates to strengthen food safety control systems, including the use of Codex texts. This would provide visibility to the importance of food safety as part of sustainable food systems transformation. CCEURO was reminded that “food quality and safety” was one of six priority areas of action in the region, identified in UNFSS National Pathways.

Conclusion

73. CCEURO33:
- i. noted the process for the formulation of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-31, acknowledging the efforts of the CVCs in promoting inclusiveness;
 - ii. encouraged Members in the region to actively engage in the further process for finalizing the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-31;
 - iii. recommended that CCEXEC and CAC in further developing the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-31:
 - a. pay particular attention to adapting Codex work to a changing global context, in particular the importance of sustainably transforming food systems;
 - b. recognize the need for applying the One Health approach in Codex work;
 - c. include biodiversity loss and digitalization among the drivers for change; and
 - d. Include collaboration with other international organizations in the ways of working.

USE AND IMPACT OF CODEX STANDARDS IN THE REGION (Agenda Item 8)²¹

Introduction

74. The Codex Secretariat presented the results of the 2022 and 2023 surveys on the use and impact of Codex texts, with a particular focus on the European region, noting the increase of responses from the region in 2023 compared to 2022, and the efforts underway to encourage additional responses from Eastern European

²⁰ REP23/EXEC2

²¹ CX/EURO 24/33/9

countries. The Codex Secretariat further noted that this work was funded by extra-budgetary resources thanks to the Republic of Korea.

Discussion

75. Members noted the survey results and suggested in future surveys that the list of pre-selected barriers could be shortened to increase clarity and avoid overlap.
76. Members further suggested:
- adding quantitative data on the use of Codex texts such as the number of downloads of Codex texts from the Codex website and references to Codex standards in SPS and TBT notifications.
 - Gathering complementary information from FAO, WHO and other international organizations on the use of Codex texts through capacity building activities.
 - analyzing the adoption process of Codex texts, including reservations expressed by Members, as a mean to measure use and impact of Codex texts. modernizing the databases for pesticides, veterinary drugs and food additives and adding a new database on methods of analysis and sampling to facilitate both the development and the use of Codex texts.
77. Members expressed interest in the results of the 2024 Codex survey on the use and impact of Codex texts, in particular on the use of the *code of practice to Minimize and Contain Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance (CXC 61-2021)*.
78. In replying to the comments made, the Codex Secretariat:
- Suggested that the list of barriers could be reviewed after the 2024 survey, in order to keep some consistency and comparability between years.
 - Noted that collaboration with WTO on its notification system was foreseen as one of the options to develop the mechanism to monitor the use and impact of Codex texts, and it would be tackled in due course, depending on availability of resources.
 - Informed that the database modernization was part of a process of renewing Codex information and technology infrastructure, and that once the databases were transferred to the new platform, other databases might be developed, resources permitting.
 - Confirmed that the *Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance (CXC 61-2021)* would be part of the 2024 survey.

Conclusion

79. CCEURO33:
- i. noted the results of the survey on the use and impact of Codex text, in particular those relevant to the region;
 - ii. expressed its interest in additional quantitative data on the use of Codex texts (e.g. downloads of Codex texts from the Codex website and references to Codex standards in SPS and TBT notifications) as well as complementary information that FAO, WHO and other international organizations obtain from their capacity building activities;
 - iii. identified the modernisation of the databases for pesticides, veterinary drugs and food additives and the addition of a new database on methods of analysis and sampling as a useful step to facilitate both the development and the use of Codex texts;
 - iv. expressed its interest in the results of the 2024 Codex survey on the use and impact of Codex texts, in particular on the use of the *code of practice to Minimize and Contain Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance (CXC 61-2021)*; and
 - v. encouraged sharing of country experiences on the use of Codex texts that could be taken into consideration in the overall monitoring framework.

NOMINATION OF THE COORDINATOR FOR EUROPE (Agenda Item 9)²²

²² CX/EURO 24/33/10

80. CCEURO33 unanimously agreed to recommend CAC47 (2024) to re-appoint Germany as Coordinator for Europe for a 2nd term.
81. Germany thanked all delegations for their support and expressed its commitment to continue serving as Coordinator for Europe.

OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 10)

82. CCEURO33 noted that there was no other business to discuss.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION (Agenda Item 11)

83. CCEURO33 was informed that the date and place of CCEURO34 was tentatively scheduled to be held in approximately 2.5 years' time subject to discussion between the Coordinator and the Codex Secretariat.