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codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
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Agenda Item 12

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Twenty-ninth Session

International Conference Centre, Geneva (Switzerland), 3 – 7 July 2006

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

BACKGROUND

1. In accordance with Rule IX.4 of the Rules of Procedure, the Directors-General of FAO or WHO may invite intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations to attend as observers sessions of the Commission and of its subsidiary bodies. Participation of international organizations in the work of the Commission, and the relations between the Commission and such organizations are governed by the relevant provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission and of the Constitutions of FAO or WHO, as well as by the applicable regulations of FAO or WHO on relations with international organizations; such relations are handled by the Director-General of FAO or of WHO as appropriate.

A. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Guidelines for Cooperation with International Intergovernmental Organizations

2. The 28th Session of the Commission adopted the Guidelines on Cooperation between the Codex Alimentarius Commission and International Intergovernmental Organizations in the Elaboration of Standards and Related Texts.¹ The guidelines have been included in the 15th Edition of the Procedural Manual.

Relations between Codex and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)

3. The 28th Session of the Commission expressed its appreciation for the active participation of OIE in the work of Codex and reiterated its interest for strengthening this cooperation. The importance of close

¹ ALINORM 05/28/41 paras 43-44

coordination between the OIE and Codex to avoid duplication, gaps and conflicts in the work of the two organizations was stressed. The Commission endorsed the following recommendation of the 55th Session of the Executive Committee related to the collaboration between Codex and OIE:

- OIE be encouraged to continue to participate actively in the standard-setting work of the Commission, namely through the work of relevant subsidiary bodies of the Commission;
- OIE be invited to regularly submit, to relevant Codex subsidiary bodies, reports on its activities relevant to the work of these subsidiary bodies, while these subsidiary bodies continue to seek ways to improve cooperation with OIE in their respective area of work and inform the Executive Committee of their decisions/recommendations accordingly; and
- OIE be invited to submit a summary report to the regular sessions of the Commission on its activities of relevance to the work of the Commission, including the outcome of the OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety.²

4. In accordance with the recommendations above, a summary report of the activities of the OIE relevant to the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission will be made available to the Commission separately (CAC/29 INF/4).

5. Since July 2005, the OIE submitted a report on its activities to the 5th Session of the Codex ad hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Foods Derived from Biotechnology (September 2005). The Task Force noted the information provided by the OIE and, when deciding to develop a guideline for the conduct of food safety assessment of foods derived from recombinant-DNA animals, noted that coordination with the OIE might be required, as appropriate. Subsequently, the representatives of the OIE participated in the 14th Session of the Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (November 2005), the 7th Session of the Committee on Milk and Milk Products (March 2006), the 23rd Session of the Committee on General Principles (April 2006) and the 11th Session of the Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (May 2006).

6. The Commission noted at its 26th Session that an OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety had been established in 2002, including experts from Codex, with a mandate to elaborate international standards on microbiological and chemical hazards existing in the animal production chain, to identify gaps and duplication in OIE and Codex texts and to ensure their harmonization and to strengthen the collaboration between the two organizations³. Since then the OIE Working Group held five meetings, the most recent one being convened in Paris from 30 January to 1 February 2006. Experts with knowledge and experiences in Codex and the Secretary of the Codex Alimentarius Commission participated in these meetings at the invitation of the OIE. The reports of the meetings are available from the OIE website (http://www.oie.int/eng/secu_sanitaire/en_introduction.htm).

7. Furthermore, experts with knowledge and experiences in Codex recently participated in the meetings of the OIE *ad hoc* Group on Identification and Traceability of Live Animals (June 2005 and February 2006) and the OIE *ad hoc* Group on Biotechnology (April 2006).

Relations between Codex and Intergovernmental Organizations other than the OIE

8. The First Session of the International Plant Protection Convention's (IPPC) Commission of Phytosanitary Measures (CPM) was held in Rome from 3-7 April 2006. When reporting on cooperation with relevant organizations, the IPPC Secretariat informed the CPM that informal liaison continued between the Secretariats of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the IPPC on issues of mutual interest. An example of this was the attendance of a representative of the Codex secretariat, together with a representative from the OIE, at a recent IPPC working group held on electronic certification. This was in accordance with the terms of reference for the working group to use Codex relevant texts and inputs as a guide to provide the basic

² ALINORM 05/28/41 paras 201-203

³ ALINORM 03/41, para.191

principles for electronic phytosanitary certification. The Codex secretariat has also attended other meetings of the IPPC, including some of its subsidiary bodies.⁴

9. Reports of activities relevant to the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission will be provided from the World Trade Organization (CAC/29 INF/5) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (CAC/29 INF/6).

10. The Commission is **invited** to note the information above and provide any guidance deemed appropriate to further cooperation and coordination between the Commission and other intergovernmental organizations.

B. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

11. In accordance with Article 6 of the *Principles Concerning the Participation of International Non-Governmental Organizations in the Work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission*⁵, the Secretary reports to the Codex Alimentarius Commission on the relations between the Codex Alimentarius Commission and international non-governmental organizations established in accordance with the present procedures and provides a list of organizations granted Observer Status, with an indication of the membership that they represent.

12. A list of all international non-governmental organizations currently in observer status with the Codex Alimentarius Commission and a list of all applications for observer status considered since the 28th Session of the Commission will be provided to the Commission for information (CAC/29 INF/2).

Relations between Codex and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO)

13. The Executive Committee at its 53rd session agreed that the Codex Secretariat establish preliminary contact with the ISO to obtain information on the current status of food safety-related work within the ISO and present its findings to the Executive Committee, together with the implications to the work being undertaken by Codex⁶.

14. The 27th Session of the Commission agreed that the Secretariat should maintain its contacts with ISO and report to the Executive Committee and the Commission on ISO activities of relevance to Codex work.⁷

15. The 55th Session of the Executive Committee agreed that contacts should be maintained between the Secretariats of Codex and ISO. It was also agreed that in order to minimise duplication of work and to increase consistency of normative guidance between Codex and ISO, national Codex Contact Points should be encouraged to strengthen communication and coordination with the respective national focal point for ISO.⁸

16. The 28th Session of the Commission supported continued cooperation and coordination with ISO and agreed that the Codex Secretariat should maintain its contacts with ISO and report regularly to the Commission on ISO activities of relevance to Codex work.⁹

17. The 57th Session of the Executive Committee noted that Codex was in liaison status with Technical Committee 34 (Food Products) of ISO and that the Codex Secretariat, where its resources allowed, reviewed a limited number of ISO draft standards of relevance to the work of Codex, with the informal assistance of the Chairpersons of relevant Codex subsidiary bodies, and communicated its observations to the ISO. The aim of this exercise was mainly to document major differences between Codex texts and future ISO

⁴ CPM 2006/INF/9 (Report on cooperation with relevant organization); CPM 2006/18 (Report of the Working Group on Electronic Certification); the final report of the First Session of the CPM will be available soon.

⁵ The Principles, as revised by the 28th Session of the Commission, entered into force upon the approval by the Directors-General of the amendments to the Rule on observers of the Rules of Procedure (Procedural Manual, 15th Edition, FAO/WHO, Rome, 2005).

⁶ ALINORM 04/27/3, para. 99

⁷ ALINORM 03/27/41 para. 187

⁸ ALINORM 05/28/3 paras 91-94

⁹ ALINORM 04/28/41 para.213

standards and to draw the attention of ISO to potential gaps or conflicts. The Executive Committee agreed that the exchange of information between Codex and ISO secretariats should continue and that in order to minimise duplication of work and to increase consistency of normative guidance between Codex and ISO, national Codex Contact Points should be encouraged to strengthen communication and coordination with the respective national focal point for ISO.¹⁰

18. An information paper on ISO activities relevant to Codex work will be submitted by the ISO Central Secretariat to the Commission (CAC/29 INF/7). Additionally, the information provided by the Secretariat of ISO Technical Committee 34, on selected work items of interest to Codex, is summarised in Table 1 below.

19. The Commission is **invited** to note the information provided, identify those areas where coordination of work between Codex and ISO should be maintained or strengthened and make proposals on practical modalities for implementing such coordination, as appropriate.

Table 1. Selected ISO/TC 34 work items of interest to Codex (as of May 2006)

PROJECT NUMBER	TITLE	STATUS
ISO 22000:2005	Food safety management systems – Requirements for any organization in the food chain	Published on 1 September 2005
ISO/TS 22004	Food safety management systems — Guidance on the application of ISO 22000:2005	Published on 15 November 2005.
ISO/DTS 22003	Food safety management systems — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of food safety management systems	DTS.2 was circulated on 4 May 2006 for a 2 month voting period.
ISO/DIS 22005	Traceability in feed and food chain — General principles and basic requirements for system design and implementation	The Draft International Standard was approved on 19 April 2006.
ISO/CD 22006 (re-numbered from 22002)	Quality Management Systems – Guidance on the application of ISO 9001:2000 for crop production	ISO/TC 34/WG 12 was established in October 2005; the Committee Draft will be circulated for vote and comments in the first half of 2006.
ISO/CD 22810	Food irradiation – Good processing practices for the irradiation of foods intended to human consumption	Votes and comments on the Committee Draft were circulated on 19 January 2006.

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ALINORM 06/29/3 paras 98-99