



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

38th Session, CICG

Geneva, Switzerland, 6 - 11 July 2015

MATTERS ARISING FROM FAO AND WHO

RECENT ACTIVITIES ON ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

(Prepared by FAO and WHO)

Background

1. The Codex Alimentarius Commission has actively been engaged in the fight against antimicrobial resistance (AMR) through standard setting, supported by the provision of scientific advice by FAO and WHO, often with participation of OIE¹. The major achievements of the Commission are:

- Adoption of [Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Antimicrobial Resistance](#) (CAC/RCP 61-2005), developed by CCRVDF; and
- Adoption of [Guidelines on Risk Analysis of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance](#) (CAC/GL 77-2011), developed by the TFAMR.

2. More recently, the Second FAO/WHO International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), which met on 19-21 November 2014, adopted a Rome Declaration on Nutrition², which recognized that food systems need to contribute to preventing and addressing infectious diseases, including zoonotic diseases, and tackling antimicrobial resistance. The 68th World Health Assembly (May 2015) endorsed the Rome Declaration and the resulting Framework for Action for its implementation, which recommended to:

- Raise awareness among relevant stakeholders on the problems posed by antimicrobial resistance, and implement appropriate multisectoral measures to address antimicrobial resistance, including prudent use of antimicrobials in veterinary and human medicine (Recommendation 56); and
- Develop and implement national guidelines on prudent use of antimicrobials in food-producing animals according to internationally recognized standards adopted by competent international organizations to reduce non-therapeutic use of antimicrobials and to phase out the use of antimicrobials as growth promoters in the absence of risk analysis as described in Codex Code of Practice CAC/RCP 61-2005 (Recommendation 57).

WHO Global Action Plan on AMR

3. The World Health Assembly (WHA) had noted the problems related to AMR at several occasions and adopted a series of resolutions (WHA39.27, WHA47.13, WHA51.17, WHA54.14, WHA58.27, WHA60.16, and WHA66.22).

4. The 67th World Health Assembly (May 2014) requested the development of a draft global action plan on antimicrobial resistance (WHA67.25). This triggered a drafting process with active participation of FAO and OIE, as well as WHO Member States³.

5. The 68th World Health Assembly in May 2015 adopted the Global Action Plan (GAP) to combat antimicrobial resistance. The Plan lays out five strategic objectives:

- i) Improve awareness and understanding on AMR
- ii) Strengthen knowledge through surveillance and research
- iii) Reduce incidence of infection
- iv) Optimize use of antimicrobials

¹ <http://www.who.int/foodsafety/publications/antimicrobial-resistance/en/>

² Rome Declaration on Nutrition. Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ml542e.pdf>

³ <http://www.who.int/drugresistance/en/>

v) Ensure sustainable investment in countering AMR

6. Recognizing that the main impact of antimicrobial resistance is on human health, but that both the contributing factors and the consequences, including economic and others, go beyond health, and that there is a need for a coherent, comprehensive and integrated “One Health” approach, involving different actors and sectors such as human and veterinary medicine, agriculture, finance, environment and consumers, the GAP also aims to strengthen the tripartite collaboration between FAO, OIE and WHO for combating antimicrobial resistance. The GAP⁴, together with an accompanying WHA Resolution 68.7⁵, is available on the WHO website.

7. The WHA resolution urges WHO Member States to have in place, by May 2017, national action plans on antimicrobial resistance that are aligned with the global action plan and with standards and guidelines established by relevant intergovernmental bodies, such as Codex.

8. Furthermore, the GAP specifically states under Objective 2 of the Framework for Action: “FAO, with WHO, should review and update regularly the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Code of Practice to minimize and contain antimicrobial resistance and the Codex Alimentarius guidelines for risk analysis of foodborne antimicrobial resistance.”

FAO Resolution on AMR

9. FAO, aware of the importance of access to effective antimicrobials, the health and economic consequences of AMR and the need for a coherent comprehensive and balanced approach to address the issue have recently discussed AMR at the 24th Session of the Committee on Agriculture⁶ (October 2014), 151st Session of Council⁷ (March 2015) and 39th Session of Conference (June 2015).

10. Having considered a Status Report on Antimicrobial Resistance in food, agriculture and the environment⁸, noting the relevant and agreed Codex Alimentarius Commission texts related to AMR as well as the WHA Resolution and the recently adopted and aforementioned Global Action Plan, the 39th Session of FAO Conference (June 2015) adopted resolution C 2015/28 Rev.1 on AMR. The Resolution calls upon FAO to ensure that the organization is actively engaged and coordinated in promoting the work on combating AMR and to strengthen the tripartite collaboration between FAO, WHO and OIE to combat AMR in the spirit of a One Health Approach. Strongly supporting the ongoing work of FAO to assess the evidence of antimicrobial resistance in food and agriculture systems, identify knowledge gaps and provide recommendations for effectively combating AMR, the Resolution further requests FAO to actively support and provide capacity building as appropriate in those areas pertinent to combating AMR and to support implementation of the Global Action Plan on AMR.

11. The FAO Conference urged Members to increase political awareness, engagement and leadership to ensure continued access to antimicrobial drugs through use of the Codex *Code of Practice to Minimize and Contain Antimicrobial Resistance* as well as other relevant instruments. In addition, it urged Members to strengthen national monitoring of antimicrobial resistance and the use of antimicrobials in food and agriculture production (terrestrial, aquatic, and feed), regulation of their prescription and use and compliance with those regulations in cooperation with OIE, WHO and FAO, in accordance with OIE and Codex standards and to take urgent action to mitigate risks of inappropriate antimicrobial use and AMR. The FAO Resolution is available on the FAO Website.

Recommendations:

12. The Commission is invited to note the rising public health threat of antimicrobial resistance, including AMR from antimicrobial use in the food chain and to take action as requested in the Global Action Plan on AMR with the WHO Resolution on AMR, the FAO Resolution on AMR, and the recommendations from ICN2. In line with the recognition of the relevant Codex standards within these texts, the need for WHO Member States to develop national action plans on AMR by 2017, and considering that the Codex texts were adopted some time ago, FAO and WHO:

- Invite Codex members to review the extent to which they are adopting and applying the existing Codex guidance and identify major capacity development gaps and any other challenges they face in adopting and applying these standards. This information should be provided to FAO and WHO to feed into the work planning on AMR with regard to implementation of the GAP and the FAO Resolution on AMR, in particular in support of the development of national AMR strategies.

⁴ http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA68/A68_20-en.pdf

⁵ http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA68/A68_R7-en.pdf

⁶ See paras 8 and 12 <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ML895e.pdf>

⁷ See para 35 <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mn325e.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mm736e.pdf> (for Draft FAO Resolution see Appendix A)

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- Invite Codex members to review the existing Codex texts (CAC/RCP 61-2005 and CAC/GL 77-2011) and evaluate the need for their update, taking into consideration the developments in the area over the past 10 years, the afore mentioned discussions and agreements of the WHO and FAO governing bodies, and submit any proposal to support revision of the text (through a Project document) to a future session of the CCRVDF and/or the Executive Committee as appropriate.
 - Invite Codex Members to consider the need to request FAO, WHO and OIE to convene expert meetings to review any new scientific evidence related to the AMR in the food chain including risk management options for the containment of AMR in support of any revision of Codex texts.