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codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
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WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



JOINT OFFICE: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 ROME Tel: 39 06 57051 www.codexalimentarius.net Email: codex@fao.org Facsimile: 39 06 5705 4593

Agenda Item 7

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Fifty-fifth Session, FAO Headquarters

Rome (Italy), 9 – 11 February 2005

RELATION BETWEEN THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Relation between Codex and OIE

1. The 53rd Session of the Executive Committee (February 2004) discussed the issue on relations between Codex and the Office international des épizooties (OIE). Recalling that several cooperation activities were being implemented between Codex and OIE, including the establishment in 2002 of an OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety, the Executive Committee noted that there were a number of areas for potential collaboration between Codex and OIE, including animal feeding, veterinary drugs, BSE and fish farming, and that there was pressing need to avoid duplication and gaps in the work undertaken by Codex and OIE.

2. The Executive Committee further noted that cooperation agreements existed between FAO and OIE, and between WHO and OIE, but not between Codex and OIE. It further noted that any future collaboration in which Codex might wish to engage with OIE would need to be appropriately handled by the parent organizations in accordance with the statute of the Commission and the relevant rules of the parent organizations.

3. The Executive Committee agreed to request FAO and WHO to initiate discussion with OIE as to how to foster and oversee the relations between Codex and OIE, and that the Executive Committee and the Commission should be consulted by the parent organizations before concrete steps be taken to develop such relations. The Committee also noted that cooperation with OIE would be considered in the framework of cooperation with international governmental organizations being developed by the Committee on General Principles¹.

4. The 27th Session of the Commission (June-July 2004) discussed the matter and reiterated its interest for increased cooperation with OIE. The Commission suggested that FAO and WHO initiate discussion in

¹ ALINORM 04/27/3 paras 100-104

accordance with the recommendations of the 53rd Session of the Executive Committee. The Commission, at the same time, requested the Committee on General Principles to finalise the Guidelines at an early opportunity and recommended that the collaboration between Codex and OIE be strengthened also at national and regional level².

5. The 21st Session of the Committee on General Principles finalised the “Draft Guidelines on Cooperation between the Codex Alimentarius Commission and International Intergovernmental Organizations in the Elaboration of Standards and Related Texts” and agreed to forward the Guidelines to the 28th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission for adoption³.

6. The Draft Guidelines provide for two types of cooperation:

- 1) Cooperation at the initial drafting stages of a Codex standard or related text; and
- 2) Cooperation through mutual exchange of information and participation in meetings.

Among the two types of cooperation, the first option will be considered, on an *ad hoc* and case-by-case basis, as and when such need arises, by the Codex Committee or Intergovernmental Task Force in accordance with the conditions set forth in the Draft Guidelines. The second option, in contrast, anticipates a more continuous type of cooperation between Codex and an cooperating organization. In particular, the Commission may identify an international intergovernmental organization having specific expertise of particular importance to the work of the Commission and encourage such cooperating organization to actively participate in the elaboration of standards by the Commission. In addition, The Commission or a subsidiary body of the Commission may invite a cooperating organization having specific expertise of particular importance to the work of the Commission to report about its relevant work at their sessions on an *ad hoc* or regular basis.

7. Subject to the adoption of the Draft Guidelines at the 28th session of the Commission, the **Executive Committee** may wish to recommend to the Commission that:

- a) OIE be encouraged to continue to participate actively in the standard-setting work of the Commission, namely through the work of the Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF), the Committee on Meat Hygiene (CCMH), the Committee on Milk and Milk Products (CCMMP), the Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS), the Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP) and any Codex subsidiary body to address animal feeding practices⁴;
- b) OIE be invited to regularly submit, to the Codex subsidiary bodies mentioned above, 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
- c) 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.

8. Furthermore, the **Executive Committee** may wish to decide to review, by 2006, the effectiveness of cooperative arrangements being made between Codex and OIE as above and consider if further arrangements are necessary or desirable, including those provisions mentioned in paragraph 13 of the Draft Guidelines.

Relation between Codex and ISO

9. The 53rd Session of the Executive Committee agreed that the Codex Secretariat establish preliminary contact with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) to obtain information on the current status of food safety work within ISO and present its findings to the Executive Committee, together with the implications to the work being undertaken by Codex⁵.

² ALINORM 04/27/41 paras 175-180

³ ALINORM 05/28/33 paras 82-104 and Appendix VIII

⁴ Subject to the discussion by the 28th session of the Commission; see ALINORM 04/27/41 para. 171 and CL 2004/33- CAC

⁵ ALINORM 04/27/3 paras 97-99

10. Subsequently, preliminary contacts were established between the Codex Secretariat and the Central Secretariat of ISO and the Observer from ISO was invited to present its activities of interest to Codex at the 27th Session of the Commission⁶. After some discussion, 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 work⁷.

11. Since the 27th Session of the Commission, a meeting was held on 29 October 2004 between the Codex Secretariat and the Central Secretariat of ISO to exchange information. During this meeting the Codex Secretariat provided ISO with information on the major outcome of the 27th Session of the Commission as well as on the ongoing work on traceability/product tracing and other certification related matters within CCFICS.

12. The Central Secretariat of ISO indicated its interest to inform CCFICS about the ISO work in general and more specifically concerning ISO's conformity assessment standards and their use in food safety. Subsequently, an information paper was prepared by ISO for distribution at the 13th Session of CCFICS (December 2004) as Conference Room Document.

13. The Codex Alimentarius Commission has been in liaison with several Technical Committees of ISO, including ISO/TC 34 (Food products). The Codex Secretariat has been receiving all relevant ISO/TC 34 documents for studying and commenting, as appropriate. Ongoing projects by ISO/TC 34 (with exception of those concerning methods of analysis and sampling) that may be of interest to the Commission include:

PROJECT NUMBER	TITLE	STATUS
ISO/AWI 22810	Food irradiation – Good processing practices for the irradiation of foods intended to human consumption	To be circulated as a Committee Draft by June 2005
ISO/CD 22519	Traceability in feed and food chain — General principles and guidance for system design and development	ISO/TC 34/WG 9 is redrafting the Committee Draft
ISO/DIS 22000	Food safety management systems – Requirements for organizations throughout the food chain	ISO/TC 34/WG 8 is redrafting the Draft International Standard

14. The Codex secretariat sent written comments to the Secretariat of ISO/TC 34 regarding ISO/CD 22519 and ISO/DIS 22000 in September and November 2004 respectively to draw the attention of ISO/TC 34 to the existing and on-going work of Codex in the areas in question.

15. The **Executive Committee** is invited to note the information provided above.

⁶ ALINORM 04/27/41 para. 183 and CAC/27 INF.2

⁷ ALINORM 04/27/41 paras 184-187