



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

18th session
San José, Costa Rica, 19-23 November 2012

DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE CCLAC REGIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2019

Drawn up by Costa Rica

1. Subject

1. Establishment of the CCLAC Regional Strategic Plan 2013-2019.

2. Brief summary of the question

2. A strategic plan for the CCLAC was unanimously approved at the 13th session of the CCLAC (December 2002),¹ with contributions from various members, it was revised at the 14th (December 2004)² and 15th (November 2006)³ sessions.

3. In recent years, progress achieved on various issues in the region, together with the need to boost attention to others, has been reflected both in CCLAC sessions and various meetings held prior to those of the Codex and its subsidiary bodies, and in various documents compiled and circulated by the Codex Secretariat. The issues requiring greater attention can be summarized as follows:

- consolidation of effective communication among members in the region;
- advantage to be taken of existing electronic media;
- increased cohesion among the countries comprising the CCLAC;
- increased integration of Spanish- and English-speaking countries;
- support to capacity-building according to the needs of each country, given the variations in consolidation among the Codex committees within our countries;
- the requirement that countries generate and collect their own data so that they can present their priorities in the various Codex groups of experts (JECFA, JMPR, JEMRA etc.); such data should include scientific information that already exists in the countries in the region;
- use of twinning programmes to strengthen the CCLAC region, for example databases, experts, studies, infrastructure and analytical know-how, given the existence of capacities within the various countries;
- the requirement of cooperation and support to attend meetings of the Codex and its subsidiary bodies in order to achieve effective participation, bearing in mind the ongoing taxation and financial situation in the region.

4. Given the above, it is deemed vital to have a strategic plan that would undergo regular revision, like that of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which pilots the activities of member countries.

3. Real or potential impact of the subject on the Codex and the countries in the region

5. The outlined requirements will allow:

- good communication among CCLAC members and with other regions and relevant organizations, thus making possible or improving the exchange of information and criteria in order to ensure ongoing discussion of any promising topic;
- identification and prioritization of regional needs with regard to standards, thus helping to harmonize positions and boost the countries' participation in Codex meetings, which would in turn improve regional cohesion;
- active participation in the critical review process, which would improve monitoring of the formulation of standards;

¹ ALINORM 03/36, para. 117.

² ALINORM 05/28/36, paras. 71-93.

³ ALINORM 07/30/36, paras. 66-85.

- participation of the countries in the region in electronic working groups and in the drafting of the document, and familiarization with its background, thus providing their technical staff with an opportunity to make observations during the discussion period and reach a clearer position for decision-making before the document moves on to its next phase;
- promotion of the development and revision of international and regional standards, which should facilitate adoption of these standards, thus opening the way to trade in the products in question, especially because Codex standards are the basis of legislation in many countries in the region and a major tool in ensuring that no technical barriers are created to the trade in foodstuffs;
- development of a plan of action in line with this strategic plan, which would enable the CCLAC Coordinator to ensure continuity, development and sustainability in the committee's tasks and pilot the region's actions depending on the needs expressed.

4. Recommendations, conclusions or solutions for proposal by the CCLAC

6. In order to agree on a strategic plan for the CCLAC as soon as possible, and taking account of the above points and of various elements already anticipated in the CAC's draft strategic plan, a text was drafted for discussion, change or improvement. In the annexed table, five specific objectives are proposed, together with the corresponding actions for the CCLAC Regional Strategic Plan 2013-2019.

ANNEX
PROPOSED CCLAC REGIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2019

CAC strategic objective	CCLAC strategic objectives	Specific objectives	CCLAC actions	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>SO 3: To facilitate the effective participation of all Codex members.</p> <p>SO 1: To establish international food standards covering current food issues and others that may arise.</p> <p>SO 2: To ensure that risk analysis principles are adopted when developing Codex standards.</p>	<p>1. To promote effective communication of CCLAC members with other Codex regions and members, the Codex Secretariat and relevant organizations.</p>	<p>1.1. To improve mechanisms for exchanging information and the use of electronic media.</p>	<p>1.1.1. Promotion of the use of electronic fora, helping to ensure ongoing discussion of any promising topic, thus allowing the exchange of information and criteria.</p>	<p>CCLAC Regional Coordination.</p>
		<p>1.2. To improve regional cohesion in order to harmonize positions and boost the countries' participation in Codex meetings.</p>	<p>1.2.1. Identification and prioritization of regional needs in terms of standards, so that they are recognized in CCLAC sessions and obtain regional support.</p> <p>1.2.2. Promotion of participation in the critical revision process so as to improve monitoring of the preparation of standards.</p> <p>1.2.3. Promotion of the participation of the region's countries in electronic working groups so that they are familiar with the documents prior to Codex meetings and their respective experts can review these documents in advance.</p> <p>1.2.4. Promotion of the development and revision of international and regional standards as necessary, in response both to needs identified by the region's members and to factors affecting food safety and fair practices in the food trade.</p> <p>1.2.5. Promotion of the participation of scientific and technical experts and representatives from member countries in developing Codex standards.</p>	<p>CCLAC Regional Coordination, with assistance from countries comprising the CCLAC region.</p>
		<p>1.3. To establish a strategy for improving communication with the coordinating committees of other regions.</p>	<p>1.3.1. Identification of the regions considered the most strategic and closest to the concerns of our region.</p> <p>1.3.2. Definition of mechanisms for bringing the prioritized regions closer together.</p>	

CAC strategic objective	CCLAC strategic objectives	Specific objectives	CCLAC actions	RESPONSIBILITY
SO 3: To facilitate the effective participation of all Codex members.	2. To achieve the effective, active participation of all the countries in the region in the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies, particularly the CCLAC.	2.1. To improve communication and ties among Spanish- and English-speaking members.	<p>2.1.1. Boosting of the capacities and joint work of the Regional Coordinator and the geographical representative in order to achieve better monitoring and more effective participation.</p> <p>2.1.2. Boosting of technical and administrative twinning or consultancy among the countries in the region, in order to increase participation regarding matters of common interest.</p> <p>2.1.3. Use of the electronic communication systems possessed by the countries in the region, in order to promote videoconferencing, chat rooms etc. (Skype, Messenger or other electronic systems).</p>	CCLAC Regional Coordination, with assistance from countries comprising the CCLAC region.
SO 2: To ensure that risk analysis principles are adopted when developing Codex standards.	3. To promote development and boosting of the capacities of the national Codex committees and/or Codex contact points of CCLAC member countries.	3.1. To define a capacity-building strategy, adjusted to the needs of each country or group of countries.	<p>3.1.1. Maintenance of a database that is kept up to date with appraisals and information generated in the region, thus allowing definition of the improvements required depending on the country situation, looking for overlapping weaknesses and needs.</p> <p>3.1.2. Ensuring that the countries in the region have permanent access, through the website, to information on projects of interest and opportunities for technical cooperation.</p> <p>3.1.3. Sharing of experience, good practices regarding web tools and information among the national Codex committees, subcommittees and contact points of CCLAC countries.</p> <p>3.1.4. Boosting of virtual meetings among Codex technical subcommittees of the countries in the region (videoconferencing, electronic fora), allowing an exchange of opinions and fostering the harmonization of criteria and positions.</p>	CCLAC Regional Coordination, with assistance from countries comprising the CCLAC region.
SO 3: To facilitate the effective participation of all Codex members.	4. To take advantage of the technical and scientific capacities found in CCLAC member countries.	4.1. To boost the capacity of the countries in the region to participate in FAO/WHO committees of experts by generating scientific data and information of interest.	<p>4.1.1. Facilitation of the exchange of information on issues that are placed on the table of committees of experts and are of interest for the countries in the region.</p> <p>4.1.2. Encouragement of the countries in the region to provide data in response to requests from the expert bodies of FAO/WHO for the generation of nutrition and safety data.</p> <p>4.1.3. Proposal of cooperation projects in order to obtain support for the generation of data from the region, so that these can be considered by Codex committees of experts, for example the definition of MRLs of interest to our countries.</p> <p>4.1.4. Creation of a base of experts from the region to be included in the CCLAC web page.</p>	All the countries in the region.

CAC strategic objective	CCLAC strategic objectives	Specific objectives	CCLAC actions	RESPONSIBILITY
		4.2. To propose cooperation projects – or other mechanisms providing technical advice and assistance – among the countries in the region, thus boosting the capacities of the region's national Codex committees and subcommittees	4.2.1. Organization of regional seminars with experts from the region and facilitation of the sharing of experience with countries with better practices, regarding such issues of interest as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analytical capacity in identifying contaminating agents. • establishment of pesticide and veterinary drug MRLs. • risk analysis. 	
SO 4: To implement effective, efficient work management practices and systems.	5. To ensure the continuity, development and sustainability of the committee's tasks.	5.1. To design a plan of action to be executed between CCLAC sessions, in line with this strategic plan.	5.1.1. Periodic monitoring and evaluation of actions envisaged in the strategic plan, thus allowing the establishment of quantifiable indicators in order to monitor progress in achieving goals. 5.1.2. Establishment of mechanisms for the transfer of information during the coordination change-over. 5.1.3. Presentation of a final report on performance of the actions envisaged in the strategic plan, in the framework of the celebration of CCLAC regional sessions.	Regional Coordination and Member of the CCEXEC for the Latin America and the Caribbean Region.
		5.2. To promote use of the regional module of the Codex digital information system.	5.2.1. Dissemination of information on the module and implementation of an awareness-raising campaign for the region's members concerning the benefits of using the system already developed.	

The proposed objectives are intended to keep the region's members and other interested parties abreast of the way in which the CCLAC seeks to carry out its work, meet the needs and expectations of its members during the period in question, and move forward more securely as a region toward the same goal.