

codex alimentarius commission E



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



JOINT OFFICE: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00153 ROME Tel: 39 06 57051 www.codexalimentarius.net Email: codex@fao.org Facsimile: 39 06 5705 4593

Agenda Item 4

CX/NASWP 08/10/5
September 2008

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NORTH AMERICA
AND THE SOUTH WEST PACIFIC

Tenth session

Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 28-31 October 2008

DRAFT NEW STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE CCNASWP

Prepared by CCNASWP Regional Coordinator

Governments and international organizations in Observer status with the Codex Alimentarius Commission wishing to submit comments on the following subject matter are invited to do so **no later than 30 September 2008** to: Dr Viliami T. Manu, Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forests and Fisheries, PO Box 14, Nuku'alofa, Tonga (Fax: +676 24271; Email: mafsoils@kalianet.to, *preferably*), with a copy to the Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy (Fax No + 39.06.5705.4593; E-mail: codex@fao.org - *preferably*).

Background

1. The 9th Session of the FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committee for North America and the South-West Pacific (CCNASWP), reviewed the Strategic Plan 2004-2007 and agreed to extend it until 2008. It further agreed that the Regional Coordinator (the current and the new one to be appointed by the 30th Session of the Commission) would facilitate consultation among CCNASWP members and would coordinate work on the preparation of a draft new Strategic Plan to be considered at its next session.
2. It was agreed that the draft would retain those activities not yet implemented and include new ones according to recent developments in Codex. It was also agreed that the draft would include timelines for implementation of activities and measurable objectives.
3. The Coordinating Committee agreed to establish a physical Working Group, under the leadership of the new Regional Coordinator, to meet immediately prior to its next session, to consider the draft new Strategic Plan.¹

Request for Comments

4. Governments and international organizations in Observer status with the Codex Alimentarius Commission are invited to submit comments on the draft Strategic Plan 2008-2013, attached as Appendix I to this document, as directed above.
5. The draft new Strategic Plan 2008-2013 and comments submitted will be considered by a physical Working Group that will meet on 27 October 2008 at the A'Onelua Convention Centre, Nuku'alofa, (Tonga).

¹ ALINORM 07/30/32, paras 38-48.

Appendix I

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE CCNASWP
2004—2007² 2008-2013

INTRODUCTION

~~The 7th Session (Vancouver, Canada—November 2002) of the FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committee for North America and the South West Pacific agreed to the development of a regional strategic plan.³~~

This document sets out the Strategic Plan for the FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committee for North America and South West Pacific for the period 2008-2013.

GOAL

The goal of this Strategic Plan is to enhance the effectiveness of the FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committee for North America and the South West Pacific in achieving its responsibilities to its Member countries and the Region's contribution to Codex Alimentarius Commission.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

This Strategic Plan identifies six strategic objectives of the region for the period ~~2004—2007~~ 2008-2013. The Strategic Plan should be reviewed at each Session of the Coordinating Committee to determine the status of the Plan and the continued appropriateness of the identified objectives.

Objective 1: To improve the coordination and communication of the Region's activities in Codex

Rationale:

Meaningful consultation and coordination among relevant stakeholders is important to ensure effective operation of the region's activities within Codex. Advancement of issues of interest to the members of the Region is enhanced by coordination and communication amongst the members.

Implementation:

- ~~◆ 1.1 The current practice of the QUAD countries pre-session meetings at Codex Committee and Task Force meetings could be expanded to include all CCNASWP member countries present at the meeting. Hold pre-session meetings with all NASWP Members~~
- ◆ 1.2 Continue to promote the ~~Increased~~ sharing of written comments on Circular Letters (CLs) and other working documents.
- ~~◆ 1.3 The establishment of mechanisms for the transfer of information during the transition of Coordinators to enhance continuity. Prepare a checklist of responsibilities/actions to support seamless transition between regional Coordinators.~~
- ◆ 1.4 Encourage ~~the~~ information exchange among member countries through the use of electronic information systems.
- ◆ ~~1.5 Strengthening the agenda of Focus CCNASWP agenda Sessions by placing on the agenda discussions of specific on Codex issues of particular interest to the region. regional concern and discussions of major Codex issues with the aim of developing a regional strategy on issues of mutual interest.~~
- ◆ 1.6 Develop a regional strategy on issues of mutual interest arising from regional discussion.

² ALINORM 05/28/32-Appendix II.

³ ALINORM 03/32 Report of the 7th Session of the FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committee for North America and the South-West Pacific.

Objective 2: To promote maximum participation of all member countries of the region in the activities of the regional coordinating committee.

Rationale:

The participation of all member countries is critical to sound decision-making and ensuring issues identified as being significant to the region take account of the full range of interest and viewpoints. Based on the premise that participation is more than merely attendance, countries are encouraged to develop and submit written comments even if members cannot physically attend meetings.

Implementation:

- ◆ 2.1 PIC member countries ~~are to be encouraged~~ to continue to avail of ~~apply for~~ funding assistance under the FAO/WHO Project and Fund for Enhancing the Participation of Developing Countries in the Work of Codex.
- ◆ 2.2 Promote coordinated approach for assistance from the trust Fund to maximise coverage of subject areas of interest to the region.
- ◆ 2.3 ~~Strengthen the capacity of member countries (in particular Codex members from the Pacific) to formulate and submit country positions on matters of relevance to the region.~~ Encourage all members of region to submit written comments on subjects of national and regional interest.
- ◆ 2.4 ~~Where appropriate, members of the region who are in attendance should be encouraged to ensure that the Committee's attention is drawn to those written comments.~~ Ensure that the country comments from Members of the region (not present at meetings) are considered by the Committee.

Objective 3: To promote the development and enhancement of the capacities of national Codex Contact Points and their supporting infrastructures of the Pacific Island Country Members to carry out their core functions.

Rationale:

In order for a country to participate effectively in the Codex process, it requires a functional Codex Contact Point including an effective support structure. Regional networking could greatly benefit the newer members of the region to improve their understanding of Codex and help enhance their participation in Codex.

Implementation:

- ◆ 3.1 Identify the capacity building needs of the Codex Contact Points to facilitate and strengthen the implementation and participation in Codex work.
- ◆ 3.2 Conduct national and/or regional workshops on Codex for Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committee members.
- ◆ 3.3 Promote regional networking among Codex Contact Points to improve communication and share experiences on Codex and related issues.
- ◆ 3.4 On-the-job training for PIC CCPs through attachment of ~~Codex Contact Points of the PICs to the Codex Contact Points of QUAD member countries to QUAD CCPS to observe the management of Codex work.~~ ~~observe structural work programme and implementation processes.~~
- ◆ 3.5 Develop a mentoring programme between the developed and developing countries of the region.

Objective 4: To strengthen the exchange of scientific and technical expertise amongst the developed and developing member countries in the region.

Rationale:

The Terms of Reference for CCNASWP specifies, amongst other things, that it “*promotes within the Committee contacts for the mutual exchange of information.....and stimulates the strengthening of food control infrastructures*”. As a fundamental element of food control systems is good science, the exchange of scientific and technical expertise will contribute to enhancing the scientific basis of the various food control infrastructures in the region.

Implementation:

- ◆ 4.1 Identify and prioritize regional issues where there is a need for scientific research/analysis.
- ◆ 4.2 Develop a list of specialists and institutions available in the region which can provide the required scientific/technical expertise.
- ◆ ~~4.3 Conduct workshops/training courses as appropriate to facilitate the development of the technical capacity of the members of the region to address the identified issues.~~ Foster the establishment of communication links amongst the technical experts in the countries of the region.
- ◆ ~~4.4 Foster the establishment of communication links amongst the technical experts in the countries of the region.~~ Conduct workshops/training courses as appropriate to facilitate the development of technical capacity of the members of the region to address the identified issues.

Objective 5: To promote procedures to review Codex codes, standards, guidelines and recommendations to facilitate their use as the basis for national standards.

Rationale:

Increased harmonization of regulatory standards, policies and practices related to food would contribute to public health protection and subsequently contribute to the facilitation of trade in foods, not only amongst members of the region, but also more broadly. Many of the island countries are unfamiliar with the full range of Codex standards and it would be helpful to their standards development/revision process to identify those standards and guidelines that might be of greatest interest to them.

Implementation:

- ◆ 5.1 Support practical ~~training~~ on the importance of international harmonisation and the development of national standards and regulations based on Codex. ~~of technical specialists and policy makers responsible for the elaboration of food policy (including regulations) on the significance of and need to consider Codex texts.~~
- ◆ ~~5.2 Developing guidance on formalized processes to ensure Codex texts are considered.~~ Compile a list of Codex standards of particular interest and relevance to members of the region.
- ◆ ~~Compile a list of Codex standards of particular interest and relevance to members of the region.~~

Objective 6: To promote the development of standards for food products produced in the Pacific Island Countries.

Rationale:

In order for the Pacific Island countries to be pro-active in the development of food products produced in the PICs, which are currently traded in the region and/or other international markets and to effectively participate in the development of such standards, if initiated by country outside the PIC sub-region, capacity development in the area of standard setting must be improved in the PICs.

Implementation:

- ◆ 6.1 Establish national mechanisms for standard development process in the PICs;
- ◆ 6.2 Establish sub-regional Standards Working Group for PICs to address common issues in Codex work and provide a mechanism for identifying standards development issues of interest to the PICs; ~~be pro-active in standard development of PICs food products~~
- ◆ 6.3 Submit all proposals for new standards for products of interest to the PICs to CCNASWP for consideration prior to submission to the Commission or other subsidiary bodies; ~~Identification and consideration by CCNSWP of all proposals for a new standard for a food product produced in the PICs so that the PICs would have a more effective input/participation before submission to the Commission;~~
- ◆ ~~Identify specific food products of PICs that requires standards to be developed in order to facilitate trade; and~~
- ◆ 6.4 On-the-job training at appropriate institutions/ministries/departments in the developed member countries of CCNSWP.

Attachment A				
MONITORING OF IMPLEMENTATION OF CCNASWP REGIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN				
Objective 1: To improve the coordination and communication of the region's activities in Codex				
Activities	Responsible parties	Time frame	Output/measurable indicators	Status
1.1 Current practice of the Quad countries pre-session meetings at Codex Committees and task force meetings could be expanded to include all CCNASWP member countries present at a meeting. Hold pre-session meetings with all NASWP Members	Quad countries in consultation with other members of the region	Immediate and ongoing	All CCNASWP countries at given meetings invited to participate	Implemented
1.2 Continue to promote the sharing of written comments on Circular letters and other working documents	All members of the region	ongoing	Comments shared on a routine basis among members	Implemented
1.3 The establishment of mechanisms for the transfer of information during the transition of Regional Coordinators to enhance continuity. Prepare a checklist of responsibilities/actions to support seamless transition between Regional Coordinators.			Contact established and information/experience shared between current and previous coordinators	Checklist prepared for Regional Coordinator
1.4 Encourage information exchange among member countries through the use of electronic information systems	All members of the region	ongoing	Increased contact among members and establishment of regional website to disseminate information and promote communication within the region.	Regional website established.
1.5 Strengthening the agenda of CCNASWP agenda Sessions by placing on the agenda discussions of specific on Codex issues of particular interest to the region: regional concern and discussions of major Codex issues with the aim of developing a regional strategy on issues of mutual interest. Focus CCNASWP agenda on Codex issues of particular interest to region	Regional Coordinator in consultation with FAO/WHO and members	ongoing	Agenda for CCNASWP meeting strengthened	On going
1.6 Develop a regional strategy on issues of mutual interest arising from regional discussions. (NOTE split out activity from 1.5)	Regional Coordinator in consultation with FAO/WHO and members	ongoing	A regional strategy agreed (linked to 1.5)	To be implemented
Objective 2: to promote maximum participation of all member countries of the region in Codex activities of importance to the NASWP region				
2.1 PIC members to continue to avail of funding assistance under the FAO/WHO Project and Fund for Enhancing participation of developing countries in the work of Codex	All eligible PIC members	ongoing	PICs increased attendance at Codex	Implemented

2.2 Promote coordinated approach for assistance from the Trust Fund to maximize coverage of subject areas of interest to the region			Key subject areas covered	
2.3 Strengthen the capacity of member countries (in particular Codex members from the Pacific) to formulate and submit country positions on matters of relevance to the region. Encourage all members of region to submit written comments on subjects of national and regional interest	All members of the region	Immediate and ongoing	PICs submit written comments on issues of interest to them. <i>(link to Objective 3: mentoring)</i> <i>(link to 1.2)</i>	Quad countries sharing their written comments with all members of the region to inform and assist them to formulate national positions/views
2.4 Where appropriate, members of the region, but especially the regional Coordinator, who are in attendance should be encouraged to ensure that the Committee's attention is drawn to those written comments Ensure that the country comments from Members of the region (not present at meetings) are considered by the Committee.				
Objective 3: To promote the development and enhancement of the capacities of national Codex Contact Points and their supporting infrastructures of the PIC members to carry out their core functions				
3.1 Identify the capacity building needs of the Codex contact points to facilitate and strengthen the implementation and participation in Codex work	FAO/WHO and members of the region	ongoing	Regional/national level training programmes implemented	Under implementation (Refer questionnaire circulated by Australia)
3.2 Conduct national and regional workshops on Codex for Codex Contact points and national codex committee members	FAO/WHO and Quad member countries	On going	Regional/national workshops conducted to strengthen national capacities	National/regional workshops implemented with further workshops planned around regional meetings.
3.3 Promote regional networking among Codex contact points to improve communication and share experiences on Codex and related issues	Members of the region	On going	Improved networking of CCPs in the region	Network initiated with exchange of emails but more sustained action needed
3.4 On the job training for PIC CCPs through attachment of Codex Contact Points of PICs to Quad CCPS to observe the management of Codex work the CCPs of the Quad member countries to observe structural work programme and implementation processes	Quad members of the region	On going	On the job training provided to PIC members	Under implementation consideration.
3.5 Develop a mentoring programme between the developed and developing countries of the region	Quad members	On going	Guidance provided on Codex related matters on an ongoing basis	initiated

Objective 4: to strengthen the exchange of scientific and technical expertise amongst the developed and developing members of the region				
4.1 Identify and prioritize regional issues where there is a need for scientific research/analysis	All members of the region	On going	Technical expertise and guidance provided by Quad countries to PIC members on critical areas of interest	Initiated in areas such as the revision of the Codex standard for Cassava
4.2 Develop a list of specialists and institutions available in the region which can provide the required scientific/technical expertise	FAO/WHO	As soon as possible	List established and updated on a regular basis and linked to regional website	
4.3 Conduct workshop/training courses as appropriate to facilitate the development of the technical capacity of the members of the region to address the identified issues Foster the establishment of communication links amongst the technical experts in the countries of the region	Codex Contact Points and Members of region	On going	Codex Contact Points to provide or facilitate access to technical expertise	
4.4 Foster the establishment of communication links amongst the technical experts in the countries of the region. Conduct workshops/training courses as appropriate to facilitate the development of the technical capacity of the members of the region to address the identified issues	FAO/WHO and Quad members of the region	On going	Workshops conducted on specific areas of interest	
Objective 5: to promote procedures to review Codex codes, standards, guidelines and recommendations to facilitate their use as the basis for national standards				
5.1 Support practical training on the importance of international harmonization and the development of national standards and regulations based on Codex technical specialists and policy makers responsible for the elaboration of food policy (including regulations) on the significance of and need to consider Codex texts	FAO/WHO and Quad members	On going	Workshops conducted	Regional workshop conducted in New Zealand in September 2007 and further workshop planned in conjunction with 10 th CCNASWP
5.2 Developing guidance on formalized processes to ensure Codex texts are considered Compile a list of Codex standards of particular interest and relevance to members of the region.	All members of the region	On going	Formal guidance established and implemented at national level List compiled	
5.3 Compile list of Codex standards of particular interest and relevance to members of the region (NOTE link to activity 1.6. This compilation list can help inform/clarify the region's strategic direction)				
Objective 6: to promote the development of standards for food products produced in the Pacific island countries				
6.1 Establish national mechanisms for standards development process in the PICS	All PICS	By 2008	National mechanisms established	
6.2 Establish sub regional standards working group for PICS to address common issues in Codex work and provide a mechanism for identifying standards development issues of interest to the PICS; and be proactive in	Regional coordinator	By 2008	Electronic working group established for Kava and Noni juice	

standard development of PICs food products				
6.3 Submit all proposals for new standards for products of interest to the PICs to CCNASWP for consideration prior to submission to the Commission or other subsidiary bodies. Identification and consideration by CCNASWP of all proposals for a new standard for a food product produced in the PICs so that the PICs would have a more effective input/participation before submission to the Commission	PICs	On going	New work proposals for standards identified	
6.4 Identify specific food products of PICs that requires standards to be developed in order to facilitate trade; and	PICs	On going	Products requiring international standards identified	
6.4 On the job training at appropriate institutions/ministries/departments in the developed member countries of CCNASWP	CCNASWP Members	On going	Appropriate training provided	