



## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

### FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NORTH AMERICA AND THE SOUTH WEST PACIFIC

*Thirteenth Session*

*Kokopo, Papua New Guinea, 23 – 26 September 2014*

### STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE CCNASWP

#### STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-2013

(prepared by Papua New Guinea)

#### Introduction

1. During the CCNASWP12 Session, the current Regional Coordinator for the NASWP Region (Papua New Guinea) was tasked to report on the Status of Implementation of the Strategic Plan for the CCNASWP 2008-2013 (Ref. CCNASWP12 para 156-160). The CCNASWP region currently uses the existing strategic Plan 2008-2013 (ALINORM 09/32/32, Appendix II) until the new Strategic Plan 2014 - 2018 is finalized and adopted by the committee during the up and coming CCNASWP13 Session to be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> -26<sup>th</sup> September, 2014 in Kokopo, Papua New Guinea.

2. The Regional Coordinator reviewed the current Strategic Plan and made the following comments;

#### **Objective 1: To improve the coordination and communication of the region's activities in Codex**

##### **Activity 1.1 Hold pre-session meetings with all NASWP members**

3. It is important to continue to hold pre-session meetings prior to the actual codex meeting by Quads and PICs to discuss their proposals and positions. This means that PICs have to have extra time available to participate as it's a good opportunity to get information and share views on the agenda of Codex Sessions. Also, PICs need to better coordinate their participation in Codex Sessions by providing information on participants attending the sessions.

##### **Activity 1.2 Continue to promote the sharing of written comments on Circular Letters (CLs) and other working documents, and subsequent discussion of issues of mutual interest as may be appropriate, including coordinating of positions, where appropriate.**

4. The Regional Coordinator noted that there is a need for many PICs to make efforts to prepare position papers and comments on Circular Letters (CLs) and other documents. It is important for the PICs to submit comments on CLs and working documents for meetings they will attend. If PICs are not attending our comments should be still submitted on issues of significance as the country position. Generally, the region must continue to promote the sharing of written comments on Circular Letters and other working documents which is ongoing.

##### **Activity 1.3 Prepare a checklist of responsibilities/actions to support seamless transition between regional coordinators.**

5. As agreed in the CCNASWP11 Session in Tonga in 2010, it was agreed to upload the responsibilities on the CCNASWP website for the New Regional Coordinator to take it on board. The checklist is a guide to ensure the recommended activities of the previous Coordinator are implemented by the New Coordinator.

##### **Activity 1.4 Encourage information exchange amongst member countries through the use of electronic information systems.**

6. The transfer of CCNASWP website from member country to member country such as from Tonga to Papua New Guinea is essential to develop capacity in information technology and encourage information exchange amongst member countries with the use of electronic information systems. As a region we need to aim at more effective use of CCNSAWP website to improve communication and exchange of information electronically amongst the CCNASWP members.

**Activity 1.5 Focus CCNASWP agenda on Codex issues of particular interest to the region.**

7. The issues of interest of the region has to be continuously addressed using the Codex processes and systems for the benefit of the stakeholders and region.

**Activity 1.6 Develop a regional strategy on issues of mutual interest arising from the regional discussions**

8. The CCNASWP Strategic Plan has to be continuously reviewed for improvement to accommodate issues of mutual interest from regional and CAC discussions.

**Objective 2.To promote maximum participation of all member countries of the region in the activities of the regional coordinating committee and other Codex committees more generally**

**Activity 2.1 PIC member countries to continue to avail of funding assistance under the FAO/WHO Project and Fund for Enhancing the Participation of Developing Countries in the Work of Codex.**

9. The PICs greatly benefited from funding assistance made available under the FAO/WHO Project and Fund for enhancing the participation of Developing countries in the work of Codex. The PICs are further encouraged to apply for other funding sources such as WHO, FAO, UNDF, STDF and other international organizations once CTF comes to a stop.

**Activity 2.2 Promote coordinated approach for assistance from the Trust Fund to maximize coverage of subject areas of interest to the region.**

10. Promote coordinated approaches for assistance from funding sources to maximize coverage of subject areas of interest to the region. PIC members should coordinate applications to ensure participate from wide range of committee and share reports to improve capacity in the region.

**Activity 2.3 Encourage all members to submit written comments on subjects of national and regional interest irrespective of whether members can physically attend meetings.**

11. The PICs are encouraged to improve by submitting written comments to electronic or physical working groups of various Codex meetings of interest to express their views regardless of attendance.

**Activity 2.4 Ensure that the country comments from members of the CCNASWP Region are considered by the committee including those not present at the meeting.**

12. The CCNASWP member countries are to ensure that comments of the member countries that are not present are also considered at the Codex committees.

**Objective 3. To promote the development and enhancement of capacities of national Codex Contact Points and their supporting infrastructures of the PIC members to carry out their core functions.**

**Activity 3.1 Identify the capacity building needs of the Codex Contact Points to strengthen Codex structures at the national level and facilitate greater participation of Members in Codex work.**

13. As per New Zealand presentation in CCNASWP12 Session, there are weaknesses of the Codex systems of the region especially in the PICs is due to inadequate resourcing of Codex work, inadequate high level recognition and support for Codex work, lack of clarity on policy priorities, weakness in the national mechanisms for managing Codex work and absence of well documented systems for monitoring and follow up.

14. Also, New Zealand reported that the national Codex systems must be well resourced with national administrative structures for managing Codex work at national level with high level support with well-defined policy frame work, consultative structures for consultations and policy developed and linkage to international collaborations.

15. Further, New Zealand presented that ongoing strengthening of national Codex administrative structures for development and support national policy frame work, development of national action plans to strengthen national food laws and standards, support for national consultative structures, prioritize and submit written to support regional networking and sharing of information.

**Activity 3.2 Conduct national and/or regional workshops on Codex for Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committee members.**

16. This is an ongoing activity and should continue to conduct national and regional workshops on Codex for Codex Contact Points and National Codex members.

**Activity 3.3 Promote regional networking amongst Codex Contact Points to improve communication and share experiences on Codex and related issues.**

**Activity 3.4 On-the-job training for PIC CCPs through attachments to QUAD CCPS to observe the management of Codex work.**

17. There is a need to organize training opportunities and job attachments for PICs to Quad countries to gain more experience and see how the Codex work is managed and implemented.

**Activity 3.5 Develop a mentoring programme between the developed and developing countries of the region to enhance the PIC knowledge and understanding of Codex issues, structure and processes and promote more effective participation in international standards development.**

18. The mentoring program needs to be developed between Quads and PICs for the PICs to have more knowledge and understanding of Codex issues for PICs to effectively participate in the development of international food standards development.

**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.

**Activity 4.1 Identify and prioritize regional issues where there is a need for scientific research/analysis**

19. Adequate scientific research is essential to conduct research, data collection and analysis to identify and prioritise regional food standard development issues.

**Activity 4.2 Develop a list of specialists and institutions which can provide the required scientific technical expertise in the region.**

20. The PICs and QUADS should come up with the list of institutions and contact for those institutions where scientific research can be done to provide backup data to progress the regional food standards.

**Activity 4.3 Foster the establishment of communication links amongst the technical experts in the countries of the region and promote the sharing of data and other research materials as appropriate.**

21. Develop communication linkages between member countries to connect with other technical experts and institutions for collaborative research, data sharing and capacity building.

**Activity 4.4 Conduct workshops/training courses as appropriate to facilitate the development of technical capacity of the members of the region to address the identified issues.**

22. Continue to conduct workshops such as Technical Workshops, Food Safety Expert Consultations, Physical working groups and/or having specific training courses to address the identified needs of the region.

**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 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 Pacific 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.

**Activity 5.1 Support practical training on the importance of international harmonisation and the development of national standards and regulations based on Codex.**

23. There has to be more training on Codex international food standards and how that can be translated to be adopted as national standards and regulations. The national standards institutes must be geared towards accommodating latest review made on the existing food standards.

**Activity 5.2 Compile a list of Codex standards of particular interest and relevance to members of the region.**

24. The PICs must continue to compile a list of relevant food standards of importance to the region so that it can be given to relevant stakeholders to enhance protection of consumer and trade facilitation.

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

To ensure PICs needs are taken into account in the development of worldwide and/or regional standards for products produced or traded in the region, input to the development of standards need-to be improved.

**Activity 6.1 Establish national mechanisms for standard development process in the PICs.**

25. The establishment of Technical sub-committee needs to be developed to enhance national mechanism for the development of food standards.

**Activity 6.2 Provide a mechanism for identifying standards development issues in Codex of interest to the PICs and establish sub-regional Working Groups, as appropriate for PICs to address these issues.**

26. Establish a sub-regional working such as electronic and physical working groups to identify and prioritise food products of importance to the region for food developing regional standards and upgrading to codex standards if necessary.

**Activity 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 Committees and Task Forces.**

27. Continue to register new proposal for food standard development through CCNASWP forum for consideration and assessment before making submissions to CAC.

**Activity 6.4 On-the-job training at appropriate institutions/ministries/departments in the developed member countries of CCNSWP.**

28. This activity has been captured in the previous Activity plans and thus this activity has to be omitted.