

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES

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Comments of Ghana

AGENDA ITEM3: INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES OF FAO AND WHO RELEVANT TO THE WORK OF CCGP

POSITION: The Codex Trust Fund plays an important role in fostering institutional growth and strengthening the foundations for sustainable involvement in international food standards development. The CTF has so far contributed significantly to improving food safety and trade, not only in Ghana but also across nations worldwide. Ghana is among the major beneficiaries of the Codex Trust Fund (CTF) with up to 31 Countries having received/receiving support from CTF2. Across the African continent, the impact of CTF on enhancing participation in Codex activities has been profound. It has played a pivotal role in building capacity, facilitating access to Codex meetings, and bolstering technological infrastructure for more effective engagement in virtual and preparatory meetings. The contributions from CTF have been instrumental in empowering Ghana to take active roles in shaping international food standards, promoting food safety, and enhancing trade in food products. This support has greatly accelerated progress toward harmonized standards and improved food safety across the continent.

Codex eLearning Courses

Ghana appreciates the efforts of the Codex Secretariat in establishing this important eLearning course which offer substantial advantages. These courses are a commendable effort by the Codex Secretariat to empower all Codex members and observers with essential knowledge and skills. Ghana highly value and appreciate the benefits these courses bring to us.

AGENDA ITEM 4: CODEX PROCEDURAL MANUAL: PRESENTATION OF NEW FORMAT AND OBSERVATIONS ON CONSISTENCY AND SUPERSEDED CONTENT (CX/GP 23/33/4)

POSITION: Ghana appreciates the progressive approach taken concerning the Codex Procedural Manual (PM) and acknowledges the merits of transitioning to an exclusively electronic format, in line with FAO and WHO policies. Recognizing the need to adapt to evolving technology and foster operational efficiency in a paperless environment, it is noted that certain aspects of the PM may no longer align with current practices. In view of this, Ghana concurs with the proposed edits in the appendices, aimed at ensuring technical consistency. Ghana would like to underscore that the primary objective of this review is to update and maintain linguistic consistency, in compliance with publishing standards, and does not cover substantive procedural or policy modification.

AGENDA ITEM 5: CODEX PROCEDURAL MANUAL: PROPOSED UPDATE TO THE GUIDE TO THE PROCEDURE FOR THE AMENDMENT AND REVISION OF CODEX STANDARDS AND RELATED TEXTS (CX/GP 23/33/5)

POSITION: Ghana acknowledges the importance of harmonizing amendments and revisions to Codex text and appreciate the effort to enhance consistency and clarity in Codex procedures. The introduction of the categories "correction, amendment, and new edition" are a positive step in achieving these objectives.

AGENDA ITEM 6: REVIEW AND POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE ON SESSIONS OF THE COMMISSION (CX/GP 23/33/6)

POSITION: Ghana acknowledges the importance of adapting to changing circumstances, such as the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which prompted the consideration of virtual meetings within the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC). Ghana appreciates the efforts made to ensure the continuity of Codex work during these exceptional times. However, we also recognize the complexity of amending the Codex Rules of Procedure and the need for thorough consultations with FAO and WHO, as suggested in the working paper. Ghana therefore aligns with the recommendation to postpone the review of possible amendments to the Codex Rules of Procedure regarding virtual sessions, with the aim of ensuring effective and coordinated decision-making in this matter. Ghana is of the view that there is opportunity to continue to learn from ongoing virtual meetings and practices in other UN and International organizations before Codex Rules of Procedures regarding virtual sessions of the Commission are developed.

AGENDA ITEM 7: REVIEW AND POSSIBLE AMENDMENT OF THE PRINCIPLES CONCERNING THE PARTICIPATION OF INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE WORK OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (CX/GP 23/33/7)

POSITION: Ghana appreciates the significance of recognizing the valuable contributions made by NGOs with Observer Status to Codex work, especially through innovative means beyond traditional participation. Ghana recognizes the efforts undertaken to promote Codex standards and guidelines via contemporary channels, including webinars, social media, publications, and guidance documents. These activities can potentially extend the reach of Codex standards to a broader audience. While recognizing the value of modern promotional methods, it is vital to ensure that any changes align with the core principles and objectives of Codex. In view of this, Ghana recommends extensive consultation before implementing any modifications, as the integrity and inclusivity of the Codex process must be preserved. Moreover, the issue of one NGO representative advocating for another non-member NGO during Codex meetings deserves careful consideration and we look forward to engaging constructively in these discussions to enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of Codex processes.

AGENDA ITEM 8: OTHER BUSINESS

DISCUSSION PAPER ON PRACTICAL TOOLKITS TO PROMOTE THE USE OF CODEX STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES (CRD 2)

POSITION: Ghana takes note of the UK's initiative to initiate discussions on the potential merits of Codex developing supporting toolkits. Ghana recognizes the importance of enhancing the utilization of Codex standards by national governments. However, we emphasize the need for a comprehensive and collaborative approach to assess the viability and relevance of such toolkits. These toolkits should align with Codex's strategic goals and principles and should not unduly burden member states. We look forward to engaging in discussions to ensure that any toolkit development aligns with Codex's overarching objectives and contributes positively to food safety and trade worldwide.