

# CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization

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Agenda Item 4, 5, 6, 7

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## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Thirty-third Session

Bordeaux, France

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### Comments of South Africa

#### **Agenda Item 4: Codex Procedural Manual: presentation of new format and observations on consistency and superseded content (CX/GP 23/33/4)**

**SA comments:** South Africa notes and support the proposed approach in relation to the new format of the Codex Procedure Manual (PM). The structure of the Procedure Manual 28<sup>th</sup> is user friendly and noted that it is line with the guideline provided by the FAO and WHO policies.

SA further noted that there is still work been done before the PM can be digitized and as a move towards paperless environment, including the work on the other languages since the 28<sup>th</sup> edition is only available in English. follow the 27<sup>th</sup> edition without any editorial changes which are adopted by the CAC Whereas the proposal to change the Current Format to digital.

**Rationale:** The work to eventually digitize the PM is welcome as the changes in technology and to move to paperless will also make it easier for the Codex Secretariat to work on future corrections, amendments and editions.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Codex Procedure Manual: Update to the Guide to the Procedure for the Amendment and Revision of Codex Standards and Related texts (CX/GP 23/33/5)**

South Africa noted the document prepared by the Codex Secretariat including the Analysis that would be considered at the CCGP33. South Africa also support the introduction of the proposed **three categories: (i) correction, (ii) amendment and (iii) new edition** would improve consistency and clarify hierarchy and align with international publishing practices.

**Rationale:** The proposed new criteria and categories should be included in the PM for changes made to Codex texts to be clear and consistent. This would make it easier for interpreting the current guidance in the PM concerning amendments and revisions and they would be follows by text explaining these changes.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Codex Procedure Manual: Update to the Guide to the Procedure for the Amendment and Revision of Codex Standards and Related texts (CX/GP 23/33/6)**

**SA Comments:** South Africa appreciates that there was a lot of work done to adapt in consideration for the future of Codex due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The work done in consultation with both FAO and WHO to ensure continuity on the work of Codex and to hold meetings virtually. All this required to look at the General Rules for FAO, which required majority of members and concurrence of the Directors-General of both FAO and WHO. The

same principle was used to amend the Codex Rules of Procedure to allow virtual meetings. However, further noting that neither of the General Rules of both WHO and FAO makes provisions for virtual meetings and looking at the issues mentioned including the considerations in the working paper by the Codex Secretariat in consultation with Legal Offices of both the FAO and WHO, South Africa support to defer the amendments of the Codex Rules of Procedure incorporating virtual meetings of the Commission

**Rationale:**

There is a need for a comprehensive approach to virtual meetings is developed by the two parent Organizations and to explore which of the UN organizations have made provisions for virtual meetings to learn from them before the Codex Rules of Procedure are reviewed.

**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)**

**SA Comments:** South Africa acknowledges the work done by the Codex Secretariat, in the surveys conducted in 2022 and 2023. The promotional activities conducted by the NGOs with Observer status is also commended as it is in line with the Goal 3 (Increase impact through the recognition and use of Codex standards) of the Strategic Plan 2020-2025. This is particularly linked with *Goal 3.1, Raise the awareness of Codex standards*. Whereas the different NGOs have interest in particular activities of the Commission and its Subsidiary bodies, only 32% of the NGOs respond to the Survey and this is meant to get analysis of the interest which NGOs have in the work of Codex. The Secretariat urged continue to engage all the NGOs with Observer status and prepare a report for consideration by the CCEXEC and CCGP34 in 2026 as this will extend the reach of Codex standards to a broader audience.

**Rationale:** The proposed Review is meant to reflect to the different methods and activities used by NGOs with Observers status for inclusion in the PM. Continued engagement and further surveys by the Codex Secretariat would give a broader view on the contributions made to promote Codex work.