CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

World Health Organization

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Agenda Items 1, 2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9 and 8 **CRD39**

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Forty-fifth Session

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Comments of Liberia

Agenda Item 1: Adoption of Agenda

The CAC 45 will review the provisional agenda and consider its adoption.

Comment: LIBERIA supports the adoption of the Provisional Agenda items as circulated.

Agenda Item 2: Report by the Chairperson on the 82nd Sessions of the Executive Committee (including matters referred) (REP22/EXEC1 REP22/EXEC2)

From Report of 82nd Session (REP22/EXEC1)

Update on informal consultations on zilpaterol hydrochloride by the chairperson and vice chairpersons of the Codex Alimentarius Commission

Background: The CAC chairperson's reports was to guide the CCEXEC on what they would expect to see covered in the further report to CCEXEC83 and CAC45 to inform the CCEXEC's further monitoring of the work on Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for zilpaterol hydrochloride under the critical review. The CCEXEC noted that the report by CVCs should indicate the broad rationale for positions taken by Members in discussions, including in relation to trade and should identify opportunities to reach consensus where they may exist.

Comment: In the initial round of consultations, there was limited number of countries and observers that participated (9 Members, 1 observer and the CCRVDF Chairperson). It is key to support the approach of undertaking informal regional meetings through the Regional Coordinators (RCs) while leaving it open to Members to also approach the CVCs directly for bilateral discussions. It is also progressive to have a clear similar understanding of the issues within the membership as this facilitates the process of reaching consensus on the matter. The region should keep focusing on the importance of key principles that underpin Codex work for example science, risk assessment and consensus. The current African position on the matter should be upheld in order to support advance the MRLs in the Codex step-wise process.

Rationale: Broader participation by the members on the issue is important given the wider implications of the final decision in Codex.

CCEXEC sub-committee on the application of the statements of principle (SoP) concerning the role of science – report from the chairperson

Background: The CCEXEC discussed the areas for which practical guidance to support operationalization of the SoP were sought namely: 1) an interpretive guidance on the use of SoP; 2) an illustrative flowchart on the use of the SoP; 3) options for the operationalization of Statement 4 of the SoP; and 4) use of reservations and abstention from acceptance and use of a standard in situations falling within the framework of the SoP. This SoP will guide in progressing work within the Codex. The CCEXEC was to continue discussing this approach before being formally presented to CAC members for discussion and adoption. It is clear that discussions on MRLs for zilpaterol and the SoP were not dependent on each other, though they were linked as clarity about, and application of the SoP could possibly help to resolve the zilpaterol issue in a consensual way.

Comment: The primary focus in the discussion should start from the foundation of science/risk assessment as a critical pillar underpinning standards development effort. The draft flow chart for Chairpersons in

discussions relating to the advancement or adoption of standards at Step 5, Step 8 and Step 5/8 provides a useful option to progressing standards. The potential work to be developed by the Codex Secretariat on guidance for use of reservations is value adding to the ongoing discussions.

Rationale: The current ongoing work on application of SoP within the CCEXEC touches on the core of the Codex system and hence important for the region to remain alive to discussion.

CCEXEC sub-committee on new food sources and production systems – Interim report

Background: The CCEXEC in collaboration with Codex Secretariat and in consultation with Codex members was to develop a blueprint on the management of Codex work in future. The full report was expected to be presented to CCEXEC by the 84th Session with CCEXEC83 receiving the interim report for review. CCEXEC82 had a rich debate on the issues related to the future of Codex highlighted in CX/EXEC 22/82/5 arising from the previous report on Codex and the Pandemic, CX/EXEC 21/81/4. CCEXEC82 supported the establishment of a sub-committee chaired by Vice-Chairperson Dr. Allan Azegele.

Comment: Liberia recognizes the opportunity to engage in the process and provide inputs as per the outline provided which focuses on four areas of including: Meeting format (physical, virtual, mixed models), including potential co-hosting of virtual meetings, Meeting schedule, Electronic Working Groups (EWGs) and other virtual meeting working mechanisms, ToRs of Committees, including Coordinating Committees.

Rationale: The ongoing work provides a unique opportunity for the region to define how Codex will work and operate in the future by providing innovative/progressive proposals in the process.

CCEXEC sub-committee on new food sources and production systems – interim report

Background: Following discussions at CCEXEC81 and CAC44, a CL was issued to all Members and Observers to seek inputs on new food sources and production systems. In addition, the Chairperson and co-Chairpersons of the sub-committee held informal discussions with interested Members and Observers on this topic, and as a result had met with all RCs, three Members and two Observers. The final recommendations would be presented to CCEXEC83. New foods and production systems (NFPS) is an area that is already growing fast and a circular letter issued in March 2022 to collect information from Members and observers on ongoing developments related to new food sources and production systems (e.g., regulatory initiatives to address safety and fair trade practices). Potential identified areas for which information is being sought include Cultivated meat, Seafood and dairy; Fermentation-derived ingredients; Plant-based protein alternatives; Seaweed; Edible insects; 3-D printed foods; and Microalgae.

Comment: Members invited to engage stakeholders on the range of potential issues that Codex needs to be able to address in the future. Regional engagement to be convened prior to CCEXEC83 to obtain views of the members on the issue.

Rationale: The identified areas of interest are of significant interest to Africa such as edible insects which are widely consumed on the continent as well as emerging sources such as seaweed which are gaining traction in the region and hence important to contribute to the ongoing work.

Agenda Item 4: Work of Codex Committees (adoption, new work, revocation, discontinuation and editorial; amendments to Codex texts proposed by the Committee)

Agenda Item 4.1 Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CX/CAC 22/45/3) Part 1 – Standards and related texts submitted for final adoption

Proposed draft revision to the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CXS 210-1999): Essential composition of Sunflower seed oils at step 5/8 (Ref REP22/FO para 45 and App. III)

Background: CCFO26 (2019) considered the proposed draft revision to Section 3.1 on Gas Liquid Chromatography ranges of fatty acid composition - ranges of oleic and linoleic acid for sunflower seed oil and agreed to: i) retain the original product definition; ii) endorsed the proposed ranges of oleic and linoleic acid for sunflower seed oil such as Oleic acid C18:1

14.0 - 43.0 Linoleic acid C18:2 45.4 - 74.0 and held the GLC ranges at Step 4 pending finalization of the revision of the physical and chemical parameters (refractive index, saponification value, iodine values and relative density).

CCFO27 discussed the remaining values for each parameter and agreed as follows: Refractive index upper

limit revised from 1.468 to 1.475, Saponification value lowered the minimum value for saponification to 187 from 188, Relative density decreased the minimum value for relative density from 0.918 to 0.916. The Committee maintained the value of Iodine.

Upon conclusion of the discussion, CCFO27 agreed to submit to CAC the revised values and GLC range for oleic and linoleic acid for adoption at step 5/8

Position: LIBERIA supports the adoption of proposed draft revision to the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CXS 210-1999) – Sunflower seed oil, for adoption at Step 5/8 by CAC45.

Rationale: The revision on GLC ranges of fatty acid composition and other chemical and physical characteristics of the product as submitted are inclusive since they took into consideration the wide variations available due to geographical differences. The current limits will facilitate fair trade while assuring the quality and safety of the products.

Part 2 – Standards and related texts submitted for adoption at Step 5

Proposed draft revision to the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CXS 210-1999): avocado oil at step 5 (Ref: REP22/FO, Paragraph 82(i, iv), Appendix IV)

Background: CCFO aimed at developing a standard that would prevent adulteration of avocado oil. The meeting noted that while doing this, it would consider characteristic of avocado varieties from various parts of the world especially in relation to fatty acid profiles and acid values. CCFO27 used CRD20 which was prepared by an eWG as a basis of discussion. The committee was divided on how to describe avocado oil, as to whether the oil should be extracted from mesocarp, seed or both. The meeting by consensus agreed to describe the product is such a manner it allows for extraction from both mesocarp and seed. The committee discussed and adopted most essential parameters and agreed to submit the draft standard for adoption at step 5 with future discussion focusing on levels of desmethylsterols, tocopherols and tocotrienols. LIBERIA therefore encourages Member Countries to submit data and actively participate in the development of the standard as the standard advances.

Position: LIBERIA supports the proposed draft revision to the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CXS 210-1999) – inclusion of avocado oil, for adoption at Step 5 by CAC45.

Rationale: A good progress had been achieved within the committee by consensus with all comments raised being well addressed. Publication of the standard upon completion will support the development and fair trade of avocado and its products.

Part 3 – Proposals to elaborate new standards and related texts

Amendment/revision to the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CXS 210-1999) to include - Camellia seed oil; - Sacha inchi oil; - High oleic acid soya bean oil

Background: Camellia seed oil: China presented this new work proposal, providing information on the characteristics of camellia seed oil and the volume and pattern of the international trade of camellia seed oil noting that camellia seed oil was extracted from Camellia oleifera while the product known as tea seed oil could be extracted from both Camellia sasanqua and Camellia oleifera thereby leading to differences in the fatty acid content, hence tea seed oil could not be regarded as the same product as camellia seed oil. CCFO27 agreed that the proposed new work should focus only on camellia seed oil.

Sacha inchi oil: Peru presented this proposal, referring to the fatty acid profile and trends in international production and trade and highlighted the updated information provided in CRD28 in response to written comments. There was general support for the proposal.

High oleic acid soya bean oil: The United States of America presented this proposal, emphasizing the nutritional benefits as well as increasing trend of production and trade and highlighting the revisions made to the project document, to address written comments on these aspects. There was general support by the Committee for the new work.

Position: LIBERIA supports the proposals of inclusion of camelia seed oil, sacha inchi and high oleic acid soya bean oil in the Standard for Named Vegetable Oils (CXS 210-1999) as proposed

Rationale: The proposed amendment/amendments will facilitate international trade of the new oils as well as provide a clear basis of differentiation of soya oil as high or low oleic oil.

Amendment

Editorial amendments/changes to the Code of Practice for the Storage and Transport of Edible Fats and Oils in Bulk (CXC 36-1987): Appendix 2 (REP22/FO, Paragraph 144(iii), Appendix IX)

Background: CCFO27 proposed amendment to appendix 2 of CXC 36-1987 on list of acceptable previous

cargo on transportation of edible oil. The amendment aims at editing the names of previous cargo to align them to the correct and current chemical's name nomenclature

Position: LIBERIA supports the adoption of the proposed names and editorial improvement of the text

Rationale: The amendment aims at aligning the naming of the chemicals to the correct chemical names.

Agenda Item 4.2 Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CX/CAC 22/45/4)

Part 1 – Standards and related texts submitted for final adoption

Guidelines for Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) at Step 8 (Ref: REP22/NFSDU, Paragraph 126, Appendix II).

Background: The Guidelines for Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) was developed by the committee under the leadership of South Africa and co-chaired by Senegal and Uganda. The Guidelines aims at helping countries to produce food products for management of severe acute malnutrition using locally available ingredients. The Guidelines were held at step 7 pending conclusion of discussions related to the content of the preamble, essential composition of fatty acids & magnesium. The contested matter was on how to refer to WHO International Code of marketing of breast milk substitutes and the World Health Assembly resolutions into the Guidelines. This matter was referred to CCEXEC and Codex Secretariat for guidance on how to proceed which was provided. CCEXEC 75 and CCEXEC 78 advised that in referencing of external documents, committees should pick the specific material of interest and include them to Codex text while Codex Secretariat indicated that the purpose and content of preamble should be limited to set the context and should not provide any requirements. CCNFSDU reviewed the guidelines and agreed all the necessary and relevant provisions of the international code and WHA resolutions had been well captured in various clauses of the Guidelines. CCNFSDU then agreed on the simplified preamble as provided on Appendix II of REP22/NFSDU

Position: LIBERIA supports the adoption of Guidelines for Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Foods at step 8

Rationale: The outstanding issue on referencing external text has been resolved. The guidelines will contribute significantly in guiding members to develop appropriate products using locally available ingredients in management of both acute and severe cases of malnutrition in Africa.

Agenda Item 4.3 Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CX/CAC 22/45/5) Part 1 – Standards and related texts submitted for final adoption

Draft Guidelines for the Management of Biological Foodborne Outbreaks at step 8 (Ref: REP22/FH, paragraph 31, Appendix II)

Background: Under the leadership of Denmark, Chile, and the EU the guidelines for the Management of Biological Foodborne Outbreaks were developed, presented and discussed in the CCFH52. The meeting addressed comments, most of which were editorial, had aspects of clarity of definition and translations. The CCFH52 noted that there were no outstanding issues to be addressed, and hence agreed to forward the draft Guidelines for the Management of Biological Foodborne Outbreaks to CAC45 for adoption at Step 8.

Position: LIBERIA supports the adoption of Guidelines for the Management of Biological Foodborne Outbreaks at Step 8.

Rationale: No outstanding issues to warrant delay in the adoption of the guidelines. The guidelines will support ongoing efforts to manage various foodborne outbreaks of biological nature that have been witnessed across the globe in the recent past.

Proposed draft revision to the General Principles of Food Hygiene at Step 5/8 (REP22/FH, paragraph 52, Appendix III)

Background: The proposed revision of the General Principles of Food Hygiene was drafted and presented by Brazil, Honduras, Jamaica, and Thailand. The revision focused on the decision tree which was agreed to represent an example of other alternative decision trees that can be applied in making decisions in food business set-ups. CCFH52 held a general discussion on the decision tree and noted the broad support for its inclusion in CXC 1-1969. The meeting agreed with most revisions and editorial corrections made during the discussion.

Position: LIBERIA supports the adoption of the revision to the General Principles of Food Hygiene at Step

5/8.

Rationale: The decision tree is a particularly useful tool for not only the competent authorities

but also the food business operators, especially the small and less developed businesses. When appropriately applied, it helps in identifying critical control points (CCPs). An

Moreover, the decision tree, provides a clear-cut and easy to use tool for food business operators.

Agenda Item 4.4 Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables (CX/CAC 22/45/6)

Part 1 – Standards and related texts submitted for final adoption at step 5/8

a) Proposed draft standard for onions and shallots at step 5/8 (Ref: REP22/FFV Paragraph 35, Appendix II)

b) Proposed draft standard for berry fruits at Step 5/8 (Ref: REP22/FFV Paragraph 56, Appendix III)

c) Proposed draft standard for fresh dates at Step 5/8 (Ref: REP22/FFV Paragraph 78, Appendix IV)

Background: CCFFV20 agreed to elaborate standards for onions and shallots, berry fruits and fresh dates and forwarded project documents to CAC41 which were approved. CCFFV21, discussed the draft Standards for onions and shallots, berry fruits and fresh dates and agreed to return the draft in step 2 for redrafting taking into account the discussions. The revised draft Standards were then presented and discussed in detail at CCFFV22 where consensus was built on all clauses. The Committee agreed to forward the proposed draft standards to CAC45 for final adoption at Step 5/8.

Position: LIBERIA supports adoption of the proposed Draft Standards for Onions and Shallots, berry fruits and fresh dates at Step 5/8.

Rationale: The trade of onions and shallots, berry fruits and fresh dates are increasing being traded globally and thus the need to provide internationally accepted standard to facilitate their trade as well as assuring the safety of the population.

Proposed amendment to the Standard for Bananas (CXS 205-1997) for adoption (Ref: REP22/FFV Paragraph 88, Appendix V)

Background: The proposed amendment to the Standard for Bananas, seeks to align the scope of the Standard to reflect the list of varieties covered in the annex of the standard and provide better guidance to member countries and the banana industry. The proposed amendment to the Standard for Bananas was discussed at CCFFV22. There was broad support at the Committee for the Standard to be amended so the Scope of the Standard correctly reflected the list of varieties covered in its Annex to provide better guidance to the Banana industry. CCFFV22 agreed to forward the proposed amendment to the Standard for Bananas to CAC45 for adoption

Position: LIBERIA supports adoption of the proposed amendment to the Standard for Bananas.

Rationale: The proposed amendment aligns the Scope of the Standard, reflecting the list of varieties covered by the standard thereby providing guidance to member states and the banana industry.

Part 2 – Proposals to elaborate new standards and related texts

a) Proposal for new work on development of standard for Castilla lulo

b) Proposal for new work on development of Standard for fresh curry leaves

Background: The proposed new work for Castilla lulo and fresh curry leaves were presented and discussed at CCFFV22. There was broad support for the proposals amongst the delegates present. CCFFV22 agreed to recommend the approval of new work on both Castilla lulo and fresh curry leaves to CAC45. Electronic Working Groups was established, chaired by Mexico and India for respective standards to prepare a proposed Draft Standards for circulation for comments at Step 3, subject to the projects being approved by CAC45, for discussion at CCFFV23,

Position: LIBERIA supports the adoption of the proposed new work for Standards on Castilla lulo and fresh curry leaves

Rationale: Castilla lulo and fresh curry leaves are increasingly being traded hence the need to develop an international standard to facilitate and promote its trade.

Agenda Item 4.5 Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CX/CAC 21/45/7) Part 1 – Standards and related texts submitted for final adoption

Maximum level for cadmium in cocoa powder (100% cocoa solids on a dry matter basis) REP22/CF Paragraph 59, Appendix II, Part II

Background: CCCF15 agreed to advance the proposed ML of 2mg/kg for cadmium in cocoa powder for adoption by CAC45. The limit was derived from evaluation of data from 5345 samples (252 from Africa) that were submitted to the GEMS/Food Database. The evaluation was based on the ALARA approach which gives a 95% cut-off point with a 5% rejection rate for setting MLs to protect trade. The proposed ML of 2.0mg/kg gives a rejection rate of 4.4% worldwide; 0% for Africa; 0% for Europe; 0% for Asia; 0% for NASWP and 13.03% for LAC. Using this approach appears to give the best compromise.

To date, maximum levels of 0.3, 0.7, 0.8, and 0.9 mg/kg have been set and adopted by CAC41(2018) and CAC44 (2021) for four categories of chocolates containing: <30%; ≥30% to <50%; ≥ 50% to < 70%; ≥ 70% total cocoa solids on a dry matter basis, respectively.

The MLs were derived solely based on occurrence data considering the JECFA evaluations, which showed that implementing the proposed MLs would have little impact on exposure.

Position: LIBERIA supports the final adoption of ML of 2.0mg/kg for cadmium in cocoa powder

Rationale: The proposed ML of 2.0 mg/kg is derived using the ALARA approach and the rejection rate with a 5% cut-off point. For Africa, the ML of 2.0mg/kg gives a 0% rejection rate. Manufacturers of chocolates using cocoa powder within the ML of 2mg/kg can achieve the MLs set for the distinct categories of chocolates.

Maximum levels for lead in cereal-based foods for infants and young children, white and refined sugar, corn and maple syrups, honey, and sugar-based candies REP22/CF Paragraphs 79, 96, 101, 102(i), Appendix IV

Background: CCCF15 agreed to propose for adoption by CAC45 at sept 5/8, a maximum limit (ML) of 0.02mg/kg for lead in cereal-based foods for infants and young children, and 0.1mg/kg for lead in white and refined sugar, corn and maple syrups, honey, and sugar-based candies.

The limits were derived by an electronic working group chaired by Brazil using the “as low as reasonably achievable” (ALARA) and a rejection rate cut-off of 5% approaches. The EWG based its analysis on data from 2011 to 2021 obtained through the GEMS/Food Database.

Position: LIBERIA supports the adoption of the proposed ML of 0.02mg/kg for lead in cereal-based foods for infants and young children; and 0.1mg/kg for lead in white and refined sugar, corn and maple syrups, honey, or sugar-based candies.

Rationale: No safe level of lead exposure could be identified by the latest evaluation of lead exposure conducted by JECFA at its 73rd meeting. It is therefore necessary to continue reducing exposure to the contaminant.

MLs for methylmercury in orange roughy and pink cusk eel at Step 5/8 (Ref: REP22/CF Paragraph 112 (i), Appendix V)

Background: CCCF agreed to advance MLs of 0.8 mg/kg for orange roughy and 1.0 mg/kg for pink cusk eel to CAC45 for adoption at Step 5/8. An As Low As Reasonably Achievable (ALARA) approach was used for deriving these MLs, where the rejection rate was less than 5%. The approach was previously used to derive MLs for other fish categories such tuna. The then agreed upon framework for identifying the species for ML elaboration was to use a screening concentration of 0.3 mg/kg average methylmercury. A recommendation (REP18/CF) for future ML development was also previously adopted whereby that data on both methylmercury and total mercury would need to be available as it could not always be assumed that total mercury would be mostly present as methylmercury. On this basis, determination of a clear exceedance of a selection criterion was determined only from methylmercury occurrence data, or where the availability of paired total mercury to methylmercury data enabled the methylmercury value to be modelled from unpaired total mercury data. As a data selection criterion, a minimum sample number of 74 (for either the methylmercury dataset alone or a combined regression modelled dataset) was required. Hypothetical MLs were calculated for orange roughy and pink cusk-eel applying the above principle to methylmercury, or combined regression modelled datasets where these met the minimum sample numbers. A third option using the combined dataset of methylmercury values and regression equation-adjusted unpaired total mercury values was also calculated to derive options for methylmercury MLs.

Position: LIBERIA supports the final adoption of the proposed ML of 0.8 mg/kg methylmercury for orange roughy and 1.0 mg/kg methylmercury for pink cusk-eel.

Rationale: The CCCF15 was satisfied that the available data and information for methylmercury in orange roughy and pink cusk-eel meet the criteria previously used to set MLs of 1.2 mg/kg for tuna, 1.5 mg/kg for alfonsino, 1.7 mg/kg for marlin and 1.6 mg/kg for shar.

Maximum levels for total aflatoxins in maize grain, destined for further processing; flour meal, semolina and flakes derived from maize; husked rice; polished rice; sorghum grain, destined for further processing; cereal-based food for infants and young children (excluding foods for food aid programs), and cereal based food for infants and young children for food aid programs

Background: CCCF has been discussing the establishment of maximum levels (MLs) for total aflatoxins (sum of aflatoxins B1, B2, G1 and G2) in cereals and cereal-based foods since 2013. The aflatoxin dietary exposure assessment performed by JECFA in 2016 and reported in 2017 at the CCCF11 showed that cereal and cereal-based products, maize and maize-based products, rice, sorghum and sorghum-based products and wheat and wheat-based products contribute the most to total AFs exposure, due to high patterns of consumption of these foods in all cluster diets. The dietary exposure to AFs through the consumption of cereals and cereal products was conducted using the GEMS/Food occurrence data and mean consumption data obtained from the 17 Cluster Diets. Specifically, the JECFA report showed that only five food commodities (maize, peanuts, rice, sorghum, and wheat) contributed to more than 10% each to international dietary exposure estimation, for more than one GEMS/Food Cluster Diet, for either AFs or AFB1. Based on the information generated, the JECFA recommended that rice, wheat and sorghum should be considered in future risk management activities for aflatoxins

While deliberating on the then proposed MLs for these commodities, CCCF14, pointed out that, even though a lot of data calls had been made, most data still came from a few countries. Therefore, it was agreed to issue another call for data on all the food categories under discussion with a view to obtaining more geographically representative data and to include a request for country of origin and if possible, to differentiate between maize for food or feed with the aim to finalize the MLs at CCCF15.

CCCF14 also requested to the EWG to 1) verify the presence of outliers and decide whether they should be excluded or not from the dataset; 2) evaluate year to year and regional variations of data submitted; 3) To work in close collaboration with the EWG on data management and 4) To consider whether the ML would be set for maize for further processing or maize for direct human consumption. The EWG made the following key observations:

1. Although some data on maize was submitted from Africa, most (99.11%) of the data analyzed were submitted by the USA

2. In most cases it was not possible to distinguish samples intended for human consumption from samples destined for animal feed. Only samples that expressed that they were intended for animal consumption were removed.

3. It was not possible to differentiate maize that will be destined for further processing from maize for direct human consumption.

CCCF15 agreed to advance proposed MLs for maize grain destined for further processing (15µg/kg); flour meal, semolina and flakes derived from maize (10µg/kg); husked rice (20µg/kg); polished rice (5µg/kg); sorghum grain destined for further processing (10µg/kg); cereal-based food for infants and young children (5µg/kg; excluding foods for food aid programs) and cereal-based food for infants and young children for food aid programs (10µg/kg)) to CAC for adoption at Step 5/8. CCCF15 also agreed to review these MLs in 5 years' time and encouraged Members to continue generating and submitting data to GEMS/Food; and to continue implementing the Code of Practice for the Prevention and Reduction of Mycotoxin Contamination in Cereals (CXC 51 – 2003)

Position 1: LIBERIA does not support adoption of the ML of 15 µg/kg proposed for maize grain for further processing and proposes the adoption of 10 µg/kg

Rationale: In Africa, a huge proportion of maize grain is sold as such for direct human consumption. It may be recalled that at CCCF14, it was accepted that it would be difficult to segregate data for maize for human consumption intended for direct human consumption or animal feed , as its intended purpose was not always indicated on the lot. Given this acceptance, CCCF14 directed that consideration should be given to establishing an ML only for ready-to-eat maize based on the whole dataset. This was more suitable for human health protection especially in the African region where maize was a staple food and was traded as maize regardless of whether it would be going for further processing or was meant for direct human consumption.

In the same context, members of the LIBERIA, through the African Standardization Organization (ARSO) individual member states like South Africa, Ghana and regional standardizations blocks such as the East African Community 7-member Partner States have already adopted 10 µg/kg for maize grains regardless of

whether it is destined for further processing or human consumption. This approach is taken to protect the people in Africa consuming maize grains without further processing or where maize grain is processed using dry milling (a common practice in most African Countries) which does not reduce aflatoxin contamination.

It should also be noted that the maize consumption level (12.33 g/person obtained from GEMS/Food Cluster 6) on which the proposed ML is based is about one tenth of the average mean consumption (up to 400g/person/day) in Africa. Thus, the proposed ML is not consistent with the exceptionally high maize consumption patterns in Africa where some households consume maize in all the three meals a day. In this case, the ML for the maize grain should be 10 µg/kg in line with already existing standards in African countries and the high intake.

Position 2: LIBERIA does not support adoption of the ML of 20 µg/kg for husked rice and proposes the adoption of 10 µg/kg

Rationale: Member States of the AU, through the African Standardization Organization (ARSO) and African Regional Standardization such as the East African Community Standards Committee have already adopted 10µg/kg for rice regardless of whether it is polished or not. This approach is taken to protect the people in Africa consuming rice as staple, whether polished or husked.

It should also be noted that rice consumption level (31.05 g/person and obtained from Cluster 3) on which the proposed ML is based is about one third of the average mean consumption (up to 110 g/person/day) in Africa where some households consume the husked rice in all the three meals a day. Thus, the proposed ML is not consistent with the exceptionally high rice consumption patterns in Africa. In this case, the ML for the husked rice should be 10 µg/kg in line with already existing standards in African countries, which has already been set based on available surveillance data.

Position 3: LIBERIA does not support the adoption of the ML 5 µg/kg proposed for total aflatoxins in cereal-based food for infants and young children and proposes the adoption of 3 µg/kg.

Rationale: Infants and young children are very vulnerable to aflatoxin exposure and there is no safe limit for aflatoxins exposure as these are confirmed carcinogens and genotoxins. Most of the countries in Africa (where aflatoxin limits are set for foods for general purpose) foods for infants and young children are expected to be aflatoxin free. However, given the challenge of sourcing aflatoxin free cereal-based foods, there is a need to adopt a maximum limit for aflatoxin contamination in those foods. The CCCF15 estimated that if an ML of 3 µg/kg is adopted the rejection rate will be 2.92% (well below the acceptable rejection rate of 5%). Countries in Africa and Codex are advised to reconsider adopting the ML of 3 µg/kg cereal-based foods for infants and young children. It should be noted that one of the approaches to achieving the ML is replacing maize with millet or rice, in formulations of cereal-based infant and young child foods. Aflatoxin contaminations in these two types of cereals are commonly less than in maize.

Position 4: LIBERIA does not support the adoption of the ML of 10 µg/kg proposed for cereal-based foods for infants and young children destined for food aid programs and proposes the adoption of uniform limits of 3 µg/kg for infants and young children regardless of purpose of product.

Rationale: Good regulatory practice requires Codex to adopt the same limit of aflatoxins in cereal-based foods for infants and children regardless of whether the foods are for the general purpose or for food aid programs. As previously explained, infants and young children are very vulnerable to aflatoxin exposure and there is no safe limit for aflatoxins exposure as these are confirmed carcinogens and genotoxins. Furthermore, food aids are destined to infants whose health condition is already compromised. Codex is advised to reconsider adopting the ML of 3 µg/kg for aflatoxins in cereal-based foods for infants and young children, for the general purpose and for food aid programs.

Agenda Item: Code of practice (CoP) on aflatoxin reduction in cassava and cassava based products

LIBERIA Supports adoption

Agenda Item 4.6 Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CX/CAC 21/45/8) Part 1 – Standards and related texts submitted for final adoption

Guidelines for the recognition of active substances or authorized uses of active substances of low public health concern that are considered exempted from the establishment of maximum residue limits or do not give rise to residues at step 8 (Ref: REP22/PR53 Paragraph 196, Appendix IX

Background: Under the leadership of Chile and co-chaired by India and the USA, the Committee agreed to develop a guideline for pesticides that do not give rise to residues or whose residues do not give rise to public health concerns and could therefore be exempted from the Codex maximum residue limits (CXLs), and provide examples for furtherance of the guideline, which would not be included in the final guidelines.

Position: LIBERIA supports the adoption of the guidelines for the recognition of active substances or authorized uses of active substances of low public health concern that are considered exempted from the establishment of maximum residue limits or do not give rise to residues.

Rationale: The guidelines on the recognition of compounds of low public health concern that are considered exempt from the establishment of MRLs or do not give rise to residues will support the use of these compounds as alternatives to conventional pesticides and offer a wider range of tools for management of pests in crop production systems.

MRLs for different combinations of pesticide/commodity(ies) proposed for adoption by CCPR at step 8 (Ref: REP22/PR53 Paragraph 151(i) a), Appendix II

Background: JMPR secretariat submitted the results of the evaluation of 41 pesticide residues data and the proposed MRLs in food and feed for consideration. The committee reviewed the proposed MRLs and presented in appendix II of the Committee's report and agreed to submit them for final adoption by CAC45 noting the reservations of EU and Switzerland.

Position: LIBERIA supports the adoption of the proposed MRLs at Step 8.

Rationale: The proposed MRLs have been fully evaluated by JMPR and thus presents no public health risk.

Part 2 – Work proposed for discontinuation/revocation

MRLs for different combinations of pesticide/commodity(ies) that were revoked by CCPR:

Background: JMPR secretariat 21 pesticide residues data for revocation following the evaluations and recommendations of new MRLs. The committee reviewed the list of MRLs for revocations as presented in appendix III of the Committee's report and agreed to submit them for revocation by CAC45.

Position: LIBERIA supports the revocation of MRLs recommended by the CCPR for revocation

Rationale: The proposed revocation of MRLs by the committee have been replaced with newer more trade facilitative MRLs supported by newer data.

Part 3 - Codex standards and related texts proposed for revocation

Guidelines on the use of mass spectrometry for the identification, confirmation and quantitative determination of residues (CXG 56-2005)

Background: Consensus to revoke CXG56 due to the lack of enough information about MS related to the identification, confirmation and quantitative determination of pesticide residues and that new techniques such as tandem MS as well as high resolution MS were not covered by this guideline. It was further explained that CXG90 sufficiently covered MS as well as other more modern techniques and that only a few members of the EWG had proposed transfer of some provisions from CXG56 to CXG90

Position: LIBERIA supports revocation as proposed

Rationale: There is need to have a single reference for testing to avoid conflicts in the content of the methods.

Agenda Item 4.7 Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CX/CAC 21/45/9)

Part 1 – Standards and related texts submitted for final adoption

Draft Standard for dried floral parts – Saffron at step 8 (REP22/SCH Paragraph 39, Appendix III)

Background: CCSCH4, held in Kerala India (January 2019), discussed the proposed draft standard and agreed to forward the proposed draft standard for saffron to CAC42 for adoption at Step 5. The Committee also agreed to reestablish an EWG, chaired by the Islamic Republic of Iran to consider the outstanding issues, considering the discussions held at CCSCH4 and comments received at Step 6. CCSCH5 was held virtually (April 2021), but no consensus was reached on certain items. Therefore, it was decided to hold the draft standard for dried saffron at Step7 and return for consideration at Step 6 the Sections: 3.2.2 (Annex I and Annex II);

3.2.3 and Section 8.3 only, considering the comments made at and/or submitted to CCSCH5. CCSCH5 agreed that no further comments would be requested nor discussion on the standard would be held at its

next session.

The standard was circulated for comments, during the CCSCH 6 the generated comments were discussed, and a consensus was reached.

Position: LIBERIA supports the adoption of the standard at step 8 during the next CAC 45 meeting

Rationale: Considering that, saffron is an expensive spice and on remarkably high demand, it is very prone to adulteration and food fraud. Thus, the changes are intended for the protection of the true origin and authenticity of the product. Labeling of the country of harvest would provide the consumer the information on its originality including the type and nature of the plant and thus empower them to make an informed choice. This also prevented fraud.

In addition, this will promote consumer protection and fair food trade practices especially for developing countries who are the major producers and exporters.

Draft Standard for dried seeds – Nutmeg at step 8 (Ref: REP22/SCH Paragraph 59, Appendix IV)

Background: During the CCSCH4 (2019) there were several issues in the draft standard that were not agreed upon during the meeting. Therefore, it was agreed to return the proposed draft standard for dried nutmeg to Step 2 for redrafting. Upon circulating the redrafted standard comments at Step 3, several issues were raised by member countries, which included the scope, which had no clear relation with the standard, the forms of presentation (styles) and the chemical and physical characteristics. The Committee re-established an EWG, chaired by Indonesia and working in English only, proceeded with the task of redrafting proposed draft standard for nutmeg incorporating the comments generated.

Position: LIBERIA agrees supports the adoption at Step 8

Rationale: Considering that, all the areas of contention were resolved, the standard can be adopted at the next steps thus facilitation trade, especially in the developing countries.

Proposed draft Standard for dried or dehydrated chili pepper and paprika at step 8 (REP22/SCH Paragraph 80, Appendix V)

Background. During the during the CCSCH5 (2021), consensus was not reached on some of the sections therefore it was agreed that the standard is returned Step 2/3 for further consideration. CAC44 (2021) endorsed the recommendation of CCEXEC81 to extend the timeline for completion of work on the standard for dried chili peppers and paprika to CCSCH6. It was recognized that chili peppers and paprika were produced in many parts of the world under diverse Agro-climatic conditions resulting in differences in chemical and physical characteristics and that its popularity around the world created diverse expectations.

Position: LIBERIA supports the adoption at Step 5/8

Rationale: consensus was reached on the consensus sections therefore AU recommends that the standard can be moved forward for adoption. This will encourage trade throughout considering that these products are grown though out the world and at different climatic conditions.

Part 2 – Standards and related texts submitted for adoption at Step 5

Proposed draft Standard for dried small cardamom

Background. During the CCSCH5 (2021). It was agreed to establish an EWG to prepare draft standard for small cardamom, chaired by India and co-chaired by Iran and working in English only for circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration at its next session. The EWG created worked through email correspondence to generate comments on the draft standard and noted that several issues were raised. These areas included whole - Acid insoluble ash, Seeds- Visible mould, Whole insect, Dead, Excreta Mammalian, Excreta others and Powdered Seeds- Volatile Oil. One member commented on the values for extraneous foreign matter, Excreta mammalian and Excreta others are too high compared to the values of other spice standards that have already been established. The discussion at CCSCH6 looked at the draft standard section and section and agreed on the proposals made by the meeting.

Position: LIBERIA agrees with the recommendation to forward the standard to CAC45 for adoption at Step 5

Rationale: the redrafted standard that includes the comments made during the CCSCH6 meeting will encourage trade and safe food within the importers and exporter. But also, this will encourage fair trade especially within the developing countries.

Proposed draft Standard for spices derived from dried fruits and berries (Part A - Allspice, Juniper berry, Star anise) at step 5 (REP22/SCH Paragraph 121(i), Appendix VII Part A)

Background. During the discussion on the Work Management Modalities at the First Session of the Codex Committee on Spices and Culinary Herbs (CCSCH1), the Committee agreed that a maximum of four (4) standards per session would be developed, however, over its four

(4) sessions only three (3) standards were developed. If the Work Management Modalities of four (4) standards per session were applied, the standardization process would take a minimum of 23 sessions or 54 years to complete considering there are 109 named spices and culinary herbs. Even if the Committee succeeds in developing four standards at every session, which experience has shown is unlikely, this is a very lengthy and arduous process.

It is basing on this background that the CCSCH5 forwarded the proposal to CAC44 for approval, which was granted, and therefore standards were being grouped four (4) spices per group depending on their forms. Therefore, this being a new venture 4 spices (Allspice, Juniper berry, Star anise and Vanilla) which fall under the category of dried fruits and berries.

Position: LIBERIA adoption of proposed draft group standard for spices derived from dried fruits and berries - Allspice, Juniper berry, and Star anise for adoption at Step 5 while returning the section on vanilla for redrafting at Step 2/3 and circulation for comments.

Rationale: working on group standards is a new concept at Codex therefore it is better to ensure that the standards in groups are critically looked at before forwarding to the next step. This will enable the standard to be progressed to the next steps without having to reject it due to incomplete work.

In addition, considering that, the standard on vanilla still needs a lot of work, the CCSH6 agreed to progress the other parts to the next stage while the part on vanilla will be returned for redrafting. This will enable the committee to be in position to develop more grouped standards since they would have had a baseline on what needs to be done.

Agenda Item 4.8 Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Food (CX/CAC 22/45/10)

Draft position on MRLS for zilpaterol hydrochloride (cattle fat, kidney, liver, muscle)

Background:

CCEXEC81 recalled that the Chairperson of CCRVDF had noted that the Committee was unable to reach consensus on either advancing the MRL for zilpaterol hydrochloride to Step 5 or 5/8 or to retain it at Step 4. The recommended MRL for residues of zilpaterol hydrochloride in cattle are as follows:

- 3.3 µg/kg for beef muscle
- 3.5 µg/kg for liver
- 0.5 µg/kg for kidney

The Chair had further noted that all efforts had been exhausted in CCRVDF to reach consensus and observed that CCRVDF had reiterated the views that there were no public health concerns regarding the proposed MRL and supported the JECFA scientific evaluations while recognizing that some Members disagreed. The CCRVDF Chairperson had thus requested CCEXEC81 to provide a recommendation on the way forward in the framework of the critical review and to inform a CAC decision on the path forward for the proposed MRL in the Codex step process (REP21/RVDF, paragraph 87).

Decision of CAC44:

At CAC44, positions were expressed by delegations supporting adoption and those not supporting adoption. The Chairperson recalled that CCEXEC81 (2021), with reservations from the Member for Europe, the Regional Coordinator for Europe, the Member for the Near East, and the Regional Coordinator for the Near East, had recommended that the Codex Secretariat circulate the proposed draft MRLs for zilpaterol for comments at Step 5 to be considered in the next critical review of CCEXEC together with the outcome of the discussion on the Statement of Principle and subsequent discussion at and adoption by CAC, noting that:

- the proposed draft MRLs for zilpaterol had met all the procedural and scientific requirements required for advancement
- delegations at CCRVDF which remained opposed to advancement had provided reasons for their position which were legitimate within their national regulatory contexts, but which could not be taken into

account by CCRVDF because they were not “other legitimate factors” for Codex as they were not acceptable on a worldwide basis

- advancement to Step 5 was a compromise; it would still allow for further comments at Step 6 through which Members could submit any new scientific information if/as available for consideration by CCRVDF26

Following extensive discussion of the matter at CAC44, the Commission could not reach agreement on the several proposed conclusions from the Chairperson that were based on the CCEXEC81 recommendation. Taking into consideration advice from WHO Legal Officer, it was noted that the Commission did not have all the tools at its disposition to resolve the issue. There was strong support on the risk assessment provided by JECFA, which is a key requirement for advancement and adoption of the proposed draft standard. CAC44 therefore requested the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission to undertake informal consultations with all relevant parties to encourage and enable sustained effort to build consensus in advance of CAC45.

Position: LIBERIA commends the Codex Chair and Vice Chair for engaging in the informal consultations with all parties with the aim of reaching consensus on the matter of MRL for zilpaterol hydrochloride. LIBERIA supports a science-based and progressive approach to the resolution of the issue of zilpaterol and on the strength of JECFA evaluation, LIBERIA supports the final adoption of the MRLs for zilpaterol hydrochloride

Rationale: LIBERIA recalls the scientific evaluations conducted by JECFA at its 78th (2013), 81st (2015) and 85th (2017) meetings on the issue of MRL for zilpaterol and the outcome that there were no public health concerns regarding the proposed MRL. This position was further upheld by other risk assessment bodies that have also concluded that overall, the approach followed by JECFA to establish MRLs for zilpaterol hydrochloride appears to be scientifically sound. LIBERIA notes that this veterinary drug is already being used in international trade. Given that there is ongoing international trade with several Codex members having already established their national MRLs for zilpaterol, there is need to harmonize this standard at the Codex level to ensure availability of an international reference for regulation at the national level. Without an international standard, each country would have to conduct its own scientific risk assessment to when adopting its measures on zilpaterol. This is highly problematic for developing countries, as this is a costly and time- consuming process and could lead to different national standards, causing even more unnecessary trade barriers. Therefore having a Codex MRLs for zilpaterol is better than not having MRLs.

Agenda Item 4.9 FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committee for Africa (CX/CAC 22/45/11)

Part 1 Standards and related texts submitted for final adoption at step 5/8

Draft Standard for dried meat at Step 8

Background: During the 23rd Session of Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA23) Botswana, Chair of the EWG on Draft Dried meat Standard, introduced the agenda item, and gave a summary of the EWG report as well as the key areas covered by the proposed draft standard. An in-session working group considered the proposed draft standard, resolved some outstanding issues, and made recommendations on several sections in the standard considering the recommendations of CCEXEC71 with respect to aligning sections on hygiene, contaminants and pesticide and veterinary drugs residues with the relevant horizontal standards and in line with the requirements of the Procedural Manual.

CCAFRICA23 considered the revised proposed draft standard section by section and agreed to forward it to CAC43 for adoption at Step 5; and subsequently forward the provisions for labelling and methods of analysis to CCFL and CCMAS respectively for endorsement. The committee also agreed to establish an EWG, chaired by Botswana and co-chaired by Kenya and Morocco, to progress the work and prepare a revised draft standard for circulation for comments at Step 7, and consideration at CCAFRICA24.

CAC43 discussed the Draft Dried Meat Standard and there was general acceptance, with some members and observers expressing their strong interest in contributing to the work led by CCAFRICA to facilitate possible subsequent conversion to an international standard.

CAC43 adopted the Regional Dried Meat Standard at Step 5 and extended the deadline for completion of work to 2022; and noted that the commission could explore future opportunities to convert the regional standard for dried meat into a worldwide standard following its adoption.

The established EWG considered the outstanding issues that were put in square brackets at CCAFRICA23, other recommendations of CCAFRICA23, comments from members/observers received through the EWG and submitted the revised draft standard to the codex Secretariat prior to CCAFRICA24.

CCAFRICA24 considered the updated Draft Dried Meat Standard section by section, endorsed the proposed revised standard as contained in Appendix III of CCAFRICA24 report and agreed to forward the draft

regional standard for dried meat to CAC45 for final adoption at Step 8.

Position: LIBERIA supports the recommendations of CCAFRICA24 for final adoption of the Regional Draft Dried Meat Standards at step 8.

Rationale: Adoption of the Draft Dried Meat Standard is timely and instrumental to the African Continent in its efforts to streamline intra/ inter African trade through the implementation of the recently ratified African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement. The standard can be translated into national legislation to facilitate African countries to trade with the dried meat products that is consumed regionally. This will also safeguard public health and improve health outcomes, in that safe, nutritious food will be available for human consumption.

Proposed Draft guidelines for developing harmonized food safety legislation for the CCAFRICA region at step 5/8

Background: Under the leadership of Kenya, and co-chairs Morocco and Senegal; CCAFRICA23 agreed to start new work on a set of guidelines that would support countries in drafting or revising their national food safety legislation. The draft guidelines would be a useful resource for CCAFRICA Region as the proposal considered all additional editorial corrections, amendments for flexibility, clarity, completeness, and consistency. The draft was presented for further discussion at CCAFRICA24.

Position: LIBERIA supports the recommendation for final adoption as made by CCAFRICA24.

Rationale: All outstanding issues have been addressed and the guidelines are important for the CCAFRICA region to support development/review of food safety legislation.

Proposed revisions to Section 7.2, 7.3 and 6.2 (Labelling of non-retail containers) of the

- Regional Standard for unrefined Shea Butter (CXS 325R-2017).
- Regional Standard for fermented cooked cassava-based products (CXS 334R-2020).
- Regional Standard for fresh leaves of Gnetum spp (CXS 335R-2020).

Background: The General Standard for the Labelling of Non-retail Containers of Foods (CXS 346-2021) was proposed by the CCFL and adopted by the commission during CAC44 under agenda 4.8.

Consequently, CAC44 proposed amendment to the Procedural Manual and review of the labelling provisions for non-retail containers in existing texts and texts under development considering the newly adopted General Standard for the Labelling of Non-retail Containers of Foods (CXS 346-2021).

The 24th session of the Regional Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA24) noted the consequential amendment to the Procedural Manual i.e. the Format for Codex Commodity Standards, section on labelling; and the request by the commission for Commodity Committees to review the labelling provisions for non-retail containers in existing and draft standards in light of the General Standard for the Labelling of Non-Retail Containers (CXS 346-2021). The committee considered the proposed revision presented by the Codex Secretariat for the labelling provisions of non-retail containers in the 3 Regional standards:

- Standard for unrefined shea butter (CXS 325R-2017)
- Standard for fermented cooked cassava-based products (CXS 334R-2020)
- Standard for fresh leaves of Gnetum spp. (CXS 335R-2020)

The revised Labelling clauses on the 3 regional standards on ‘Labelling of Non-Retail Container’ is to refer to the CXS 346-2021: General Standard for the Labelling of Non-retail Containers of Foods.

CCAFRICA24 agreed to forward to CAC45, the revised labelling provisions for non-retail containers in the 3 Regional standards.

Position: LIBERIA supports the recommendations/proposals by CCAFRICA24 to revise the clauses of the 3 regional standards on Labelling of non-retail containers

Rationale: To align with the Codex General Standard for the Labelling of Non-retail Containers of Foods (CXS 346-2021).

Agenda Item 8 Codex Budgetary and Financial Matters (CX/CAC 22/45/15) Codex Trust Fund: Activity Report

Background: The CTF2 project supports countries to build strong, solid and sustainable national capacity to engage in Codex work. Out of 103 countries eligible for CTF2 support in 2016, 44 have been granted CTF2 support and are implementing or preparing for the implementation of projects in 2021. The remaining countries have either not applied or were not successful with an earlier application. In Africa over 23 countries benefitted or are benefitting from CTF2. The project is completed in few countries while others are implementing the project but at various stages.

Position: LIBERIA agrees that CTF2 support should be extended to the remaining eligible countries in Africa. This may need support on increasing country capacities to prepare the application portfolio for the CTF. Codex should start planning for follow up support framework for countries that have successfully implemented the CTF project. This should focus on direct support for country participation in codex technical work.

Rationale: This position will ensure that national capacities built by the project are fully utilized. The benefits are demonstrated in the level and quality of participation of beneficiary countries in the work of codex, especially in the technical work. The remaining countries to benefit are encouraged and supported to submit quality applications in the next round of call.