

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 3

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ORIGINAL LANGUAGE ONLY

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX COMMITTEE ON CONTAMINANTS IN FOODS

Tenth Session

Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 4-8 April 2016

(Comments submitted on by African Union)

Matters of interest arising from FAO and WHO (including JECFA)

AFRICAN UNION

Position: African Union takes note of the following activities conducted since the last session of CCCF9 by FAO and WHO in the provision of scientific advice to Codex and member countries as well as other activities of interest to CCCF.

- **JECFA evaluations**

JECFA evaluated non-dioxin-like polychlorinated biphenyls (NDL-PCBs) and pyrrolizidine alkaloids at its 80th session (JECFA 80th). Regarding the former, a comparative approach using the minimal effect doses was developed in order to estimate the Margin of Exposure (MOE). Based on available data the Committee concluded that dietary exposure to NDL-PCBs is unlikely to be of health concern for adults and children.

JECFA evaluated pyrrolizidine alkaloids as well, by developing and using a systematic review protocol for the literature search in selected databases. This yielded over 10,000 relevant references. Preliminary conclusions based on data evaluated so far show that dietary exposures through honey and tea consumption for adult high consumers and average tea consumption by children indicated a concern. The evaluation is currently being finalized and will be published at a later date.

The 83rd meeting of JECFA will be held 8-17 November 2016 and will be dedicated to contaminants (aflatoxins, diacetoxyscirpenol, fumonisins, glycidyl ester, 3-MCPD esters, sterigmatocystin). The call for data on these contaminants has been made and is available at the JECFA websites. African countries are urged to submit data.

- **Total Diet Study as a tool to assess food chemical contamination**

The regional Total Diet Study (TDS) to assess food chemical contamination in sub-Saharan Africa, supported by STDF and involving 4 African countries (Benin, Cameroon, Mali and Nigeria) is ongoing.

- **Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC) Approach**

WHO is collaborating with the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) with support from US Food and Drug Administration (US-FDA) to provide recommendations on how the existing Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC) framework can be updated and extended. The TTC is a methodology which may be used to assess potential human health concerns for a chemical based on its structural chemical characteristics and estimated exposure, when chemical-specific toxicity data are scarce or absent. It is expected that because of ever improving methods in analytical chemistry, more unintended chemicals will be detected in foods and drinking water. TTC is expected to serve as an important screening tool to identify those compounds which may be of concern and require further data. The final report including recommendations will be published in 2016.