

codex alimentarius commission

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

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ALINORM 85/4

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Sixteenth Session

Geneva, 1-12 July 1985

REPORT OF THE THIRTY SECOND SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION WHO, GENEVA, 27-28 JUNE 1985

INTRODUCTION

1. The Executive Committee held its Thirty Second Session at WHO Headquarters, Geneva, on 27 and 28 June 1985. The Executive Committee was presided over by the Chairman of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Mr. E.F. Kimbrell (United States of America) and in the presence of its three Vice-Chairmen, Dr. Ms. A. Brincker (Denmark), Dr. A.A.M. Hasan (Iraq) and Dr. E.R. Méndez (Mexico). The following representatives from the geographic locations mentioned were present: for Asia, Dr. Suck-Woo Shin, from the Republic of Korea; for Latin America and the Caribbean, Ing. J. Piazzzi, from Argentina; for North America, Dr. N.W. Tape, from Canada; for the South West Pacific, Mr. W. Scanlan, from Australia. The Coordinator for Africa, Dr. J.K. Misoi (Kenya), the Coordinator for Europe, Mr. P. Rossier (Switzerland) and the Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean, Minister Ing. R. Darias Rodés (Cuba) were also present. Mr. Chaiwai Sangruji (Thailand) attended in place of the late Coordinator for Asia, Professor A. Bhumiratana (Thailand).

2. Apologies for absence were received from Cameroon representing the geographic location of Africa and from the U.S.S.R. representing the geographic location of Europe.

Minute's Silence in Memory of Professor A. Bhumiratana, Coordinator for Asia

3. The Chairman informed the Executive Committee that Professor A. Bhumiratana (Thailand), Coordinator for Asia, had recently passed away. The Chairman referred to Professor Bhumiratana's active participation in Codex work since its inception and to his great contribution to Codex work on behalf of developing countries, in the Commission and other Codex fora. The Executive Committee observed a minute's silence in memory of Professor Bhumiratana.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

4. The Executive Committee adopted the provisional agenda for the session.

REPORT ON FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME (1) FINALIZATION OF ACCOUNTS FOR 1982/83 (2) BUDGET FOR 1984/85 AND (3) BUDGETARY PROPOSALS FOR 1986/87 (Agenda Item 2)

5. The Executive Committee had before it document ALINORM 85/5 which was introduced and commented upon by the Secretariat. The Coordinator for Europe, referred to the budgetary

provision for documentation which he thought was quite considerable. In response the Secretariat indicated that on the basis of the provisional schedule of Codex meetings listed for 1986/87, of the expected need to revise certain standards, and of the need to make other Codex publications available to member governments, such as updated summaries of acceptances of Codex standards and maximum limits for pesticide residues, the budgetary provision made for documentation was necessary to provide the service expected by member governments.

6. The Executive Committee noted that the budget for the Programme in 1986/87 would be maintained at the same level in real terms as the budget for the current biennium of 1984/85. Mr. C. Sandstrom, Chief, Budget, WHO, stated that the budgetary proposals for the Programme for 1986/87 were acceptable to WHO and that, in fact the proposals had been approved by the World Health Assembly. Dr. P. Lunven, Director, Food Policy and Nutrition Division, FAO stated that the budgetary proposals would be considered by the FAO Conference in November 1985. He indicated that the Director-General of FAO had decided to review FAO's budgetary proposals for 1986/87 in the light of discussions within the Council but that it was unlikely that the proposals for the Codex budget would be affected by this, since the proposals were based on zero growth.

7. The Executive Committee noted that the budget proposals for 1986/87 would result in funding at the same level in real terms as in 1984/85. The Executive Committee wished to place on record its satisfaction with the reports mentioned above received from the representatives of the parent bodies.

8. Concerning the question of finding funds to enable enhanced participation of developing countries in Codex committee sessions, the Secretariat reported that a proposal on this subject had been put before the appropriate unit in FAO for clearance and onforwarding to UNDP, UNEP and AGFUND. The proposal stressed the importance of participation by developing countries in Codex work, in order to protect their economic and other interests through increased input into international food standards harmonization work. The proposal sought financial support for the attendance of at least one representative from each developing country in the Codex regions of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, which is a member of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, at sessions of the Coordinating Committees for those three regions. The proposal covered a 4-year period 1986-89.

9. Mr. Sandstrom, Chief, Budget, WHO, stated that in those countries where WHO had food safety programmes operating, it would be up to the countries themselves to take the initiative in programming the utilization of some of the WHO funds for this purpose.

10. Dr. E. Méndez, Vice-Chairman, recommended that this topic be kept on the agenda of the Executive Committee until such time as a solution to the problem had been found.

11. Dr. R.K. Malik, Chief, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme stressed the importance of countries at the national level placing priority on the activities of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. He stated that as soon as the proposal referred to in paragraph 9 above had been cleared in FAO and sent to UNDP UNEP and AGFUND, copies of the proposals could be sent to the Chairman and Vice Chairmen of the Commission and to the Regional Coordinators.

ROLE OF OBSERVERS AT CODEX MEETINGS (Agenda Item 3)

12. The Executive Committee had before it document ALINORM 85/25 containing a request for clarification of the role of observers at Codex meetings. In introducing the document, the representative of the Legal Counsel of FAO delivered a legal opinion which he summarized as follows:

- (i) the role of observers in all Codex meetings is limited to participation without the right to vote;
- (ii) Observers are normally given the floor after the representatives of Member States, unless the Chairman decides otherwise;

- (iii) Observers do not have the right to have their views reflected in the report of the Commission, although nothing prevents the Commission from reflecting such views in its report. In reports of subsidiary bodies, observers from countries may ask for a statement of their position to be contained in the report of the body concerned;
- (iv) finally, the practice which until now has been followed, is to allow participants from regional groupings of States to intervene on behalf of their Member States and to have their views reflected in the report.

13. On this basis, the Chairman of the Committee pointed out that efficiency, a most important factor to be considered in drafting the reports of Codex meetings, called for a continuation of present practice. The Legal Counsel of WHO concurred with the legal opinion expressed by the representative of the Legal Counsel of FAO. The Chairman suggested to the Committee that it decide to continue the present practice. It was so decided.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN FOOD (CAC/RCP 20 - 1979)
(Agenda Item 4)

14. The Executive Committee considered Document ALINORM 85/44, which recalled the position taken by the Committee at its 31st Session (June 1984) - reproduced in para. 6 of the document - and also contained the views of the Regional Coordinating Committees for Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and for Europe, as well as the views of five governments (Argentina, Ireland, New Zealand, Sweden, Thailand).

15. In presenting the document to the Executive Committee at the request of the Chairman, the Legal Counsel of WHO stated that the document accurately reflected the views held by the Regional Coordinating Committees and by certain countries, and that it was now up to the Executive Committee to formulate its recommendations so as to enable the Commission at its forthcoming session to take a final decision on the way in which the Code of Ethics might be amended.

16. Nearly all members of the Executive Committee who took the floor pointed out that three of the four Coordinating Committees that presented their views had generally endorsed the position taken by the Executive Committee at its 31st Session; it was also observed that the substance reflected in points of view expressed by certain governments had already been considered by the Committee at its previous sessions. The Coordinator for Europe pointed to para. 5 of the document which indicated that the Coordinating Committee for Europe, while generally endorsing the amendments proposed by the Executive Committee, nevertheless favoured the retention of the substance of the provision now contained in para. 5.9(b) of the Code of Ethics.

17. The Executive Committee decided to maintain the position it had taken at its 31st Session and to transmit to the Commission the text of the three amendments put forward in paragraph 4 of document ALINORM 85/44, Part II.

CONSIDERATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JOINT FAO/WHO EXPERT CONSULTATION ON RESIDUES OF VETERINARY DRUGS IN FOOD (Agenda Item 5)

18. The Executive Committee had before it the report of the above Consultation (Food and Nutrition Paper No. 32) and ALINORM 85/7 setting out the recommendations of the Consultation, which met in Rome from 29 October to 5 November 1984.

19. The Executive Committee noted that the Commission at its last session had discussed the need to consider the question of residues in food of various chemicals arising from their use in animal husbandry and veterinary medicine. The question had been previously raised during meetings of the Codex Committees on Food Additives, Meat Hygiene and Pesticide Residues. The Commission had favoured the suggestion of the Executive Committee that the matter should be examined by a Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation and that the recommendations of the

Consultation could then be considered at the 16th Session of the Commission and be acted upon by a newly established Codex Committee if appropriate (ALINORM 83/43, paras. 156-162).

20. The Executive Committee noted that the Consultation had addressed recommendations to the Codex Alimentarius Commission that immediate consideration should be given to the establishment of a Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods to determine priorities in this area, recommend maximum residue levels and to develop codes of practice.
21. The Consultation had also made a recommendation to FAO and WHO requesting the Directors-General of FAO and WHO to give earliest consideration to the convening of an appropriate scientific body from time to time as necessary to advise member governments and the proposed Codex Committee on questions pertaining to residues of veterinary drugs in foods of animal origin and more general recommendations concerning training, the provision of analytical reagents, and the designation of FAO/WHO collaborating centres for veterinary drug residues.
22. The Consultation made further recommendations to governments concerning good veterinary and agricultural practices and educational programmes for those involved in the application and control of veterinary drugs.
23. The Executive Committee noted that the possibility of establishing a Codex Committee on Veterinary Drug Residues would be considered at the present session of the Commission and that, should the Commission decide to establish such a Committee under Rule IX.1(b)1, it would be necessary to determine which member country should be entrusted with its Chairmanship as provided for in Rule IX.10 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure.
24. To-date two members of the Commission had officially informed the Secretariat of their interest in hosting such a Committee, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States of America.
25. Concerning the establishment of an expert scientific body to advise the future Committee, the Executive Committee was informed that the two parent organizations, FAO and WHO, were taking steps to make the necessary budgetary provisions to hold in the biennium 1986/87 one meeting of such a body.
26. The Executive Committee noted that while the proposed Committee on Veterinary Drug Residues in Food would be an intergovernmental body in which member governments and observers could participate, the expert scientific body would consist of experts in areas related to veterinary drug residues chosen by FAO and WHO in their personal capacity.
27. The Coordinator for Europe was of the opinion that the question of the addition of veterinary drugs to forage should be considered by the proposed Committee. He also indicated that the Council of Europe was studying the matter of veterinary drug residues.
28. Concerning the mandate of the proposed Committee it was noted that in general, it was the practice for the Commission to establish a new Committee's terms of reference. However, there were cases where a new Committee established its own terms of reference for subsequent approval by the Commission - in the present case the conclusions and recommendations of the Consultation could form a basis for establishing the terms of reference.
29. The Coordinator for Africa pointed out the problems with regard to the use and control of veterinary drugs and their residues in the region and strongly supported the establishment of the proposed Committee.
30. The Representative of the Region of North America also expressed support and indicated that improved technology with regard to detection and control of residues was in progress.
31. The Representative of the Region of Latin America and the Caribbean stated that the Republic of Argentina, as a member country of the Region of Latin America and the Caribbean, rec-

ognized the need for establishing a Codex committee on veterinary drug residues in food. He had already expressed his concern about the proposed terms of reference for such a committee, including that of recommending to the Joint FAO/WHO Commission the establishment of LMRs, since these, if obligatory, could become a trade barrier, owing to the lack, in developing countries, of necessary infrastructures and trained technical personnel, laboratories and other elements to make the necessary controls. This situation had been recognized by the Expert Consultation itself in its report to the Commission (Food and Nutrition Paper No. 32, and ALINORM 85/7).

32. The Executive Committee recommended to the Commission that:

- (i) A Codex Committee on Veterinary Drug Residues should be established;
- (ii) such a Committee should have the advice of an appropriate Joint FAO/WHO Expert body.

CONSIDERATION OF NEED FOR AND FEASIBILITY OF DEVELOPING CODEX STANDARDS FOR TROPICAL FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES (Agenda Item 6)

33. The Executive Committee had before it documents ALINORM 85/8 and ALINORM 83/7 (paper prepared by an FAO consultant for the 15th Session of the Commission). The Secretariat recalled that the Commission, at its 15th Session, had postponed decision concerning the need for developing Codex standards for tropical fresh fruits and vegetables and had agreed that the question should be referred to the Codex Coordinating Committees for their opinion and that further replies should be sought from governments. In the view of the Secretariat, based on replies received from governments, the question as to whether Codex standards for fresh fruits and vegetables should be developed and, if so, what Committee should deal with this subject was still open, as opinion seemed to be divided on this issue. Furthermore, it would be desirable to clarify, before embarking on the development of such standards, what sort of acceptance obligations should apply to "trading" standards applicable to exports but not to products moving in the domestic market. It might, therefore, be desirable to seek the views of the Codex Committee on General Principles.

34. The Executive Committee noted that only three additional replies from governments had been received (two in favour and one opposed) and that the UNECE had decided to elaborate standards for certain fresh exotic fruits, noting that the Commission, at its 15th Session, had decided not to proceed with the standardization of these products at the present time. It was also noted that OECD was developing a standard for fresh mangoes based on a draft by the International Trade Centre (ITC). The Executive Committee was also informed of the views of Mexico (see LIM 13, a conference room paper) that the need for developing Codex standards for tropical fresh fruits and vegetables had been amply demonstrated in view of their paramount importance in international trade and in view of the opinions expressed by various governments and by the Coordinating Committees for Africa and for Latin America and the Caribbean. Mexico was not in agreement, therefore, with the opinion expressed in the Secretariat paper (ALINORM 85/8) that it might not be appropriate, at this stage, to consider the establishment of a new Codex Committee to develop worldwide Codex standards for tropical fresh fruits and vegetables.

35. The Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean, Dr Méndez, Vice-Chairman and the Representative of the Region of Latin America and the Caribbean confirmed their region's interest in the standardization of tropical fresh fruits and vegetables. The Coordinator for Africa stressed that any standardization of these products should involve producing countries which are the exporters of such products and that this could be achieved through the various regional Codex Coordinating Committees. Dr Hasan, Vice-Chairman informed the Executive Committee that most countries in the region of Asia had not been in favour of establishing Codex standards for fresh fruits and vegetables. The Coordinator for Europe was of the opinion that, on the basis of the information and comments available so far, it was not possible to conclude that there was a support in favour of establishing Codex standards for fresh fruits and vegetables. On the other hand, there was a need to avoid the development of a situation which would lead to the existence of two sets of international standard for these products. It was necessary for producing countries to participate in the standardization work.

36. The question was raised by the Representative of the Region of Latin America and the Caribbean as to the exact meaning of "tropical" fresh fruits and vegetables. The Executive Committee was informed that the purpose of specifying "tropical" fresh fruits and vegetables was to avoid duplication of work between UNECE and Codex and that the products envisaged were fruits and vegetables which normally did not grow in temperate climates. The Representative of the South West Pacific Region supported the establishment of Codex standards for the products in question and supported the Secretariat's suggestion for the clarification of acceptance obligations. In his opinion a Codex/UNECE body would be the most appropriate group to undertake the work.

The Representative of the Region of North America informed the Executive Committee that while the USA was not convinced of the need to embark on the standardization of tropical fresh fruits and vegetables, Canada had expressed some interest in this work in view of the significant amounts of imports of these products from developing countries. Agreement on international standards and compliance with these would help to upgrade the quality and, therefore, value of exports from developing countries.

37. The majority of the members of the Executive Committee supported, in principle, the need for standardization of tropical fresh fruits and vegetables. The Executive Committee stressed, however, that duplication of work should be avoided. The Executive Committee noted with appreciation the offer of Mexico to host a Codex Committee on Tropical Fresh Fruits and Vegetables should the Commission decide to establish such a Committee. The Executive Committee also thought that the possibility of a Joint Codex/UNECE group undertaking the standardization of these products should be borne in mind. It was also agreed that there was a need to examine the implications regarding the acceptance of any Codex standards for fresh fruits and vegetables and that the nature of the standards required for these products should also be given consideration.

FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE WORK OF THE JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 7)

Views expressed by Member Governments (Agenda Item 7(i) and (ii))

38. The Executive Committee took note of the comments of Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Thailand, as set out in document ALINORM 85/38.

39. The Representative of the Region of Asia considered that there was a need to place increased emphasis on the work of the general subject committees, including, in particular, the codes of hygienic practice and the maximum limits for pesticide residues. Greater efforts needed to be made to secure increased implementation of Codex standards.

40. The Executive Committee noted that the comments made were extremely constructive and referred them to the Commission for more detailed consideration.

The Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Promotion of Primary Health Care (Agenda Item 7(iii))

41. The Executive Committee had before it document ALINORM 85/39 which had been prepared by WHO in response to a request made by the Executive Committee during its 31st session (see ALINORM 85/3, paras 154 to 158). In introducing this paper, Dr Käferstein of WHO pointed out that the paper attempted to identify some precise actions which could be taken or initiated by the Commission in order to help implement Primary Health Care (PHC).

42. An International Conference held in Alma-Ata, USSR in 1978 had concluded that the goal of WHO and its Member States - Health for All by the Year 2000 could be achieved only through the improvement and expansion of PHC. PHC consisted of several components, one of which was the promotion of (safe) food supply and proper nutrition and emphasized the need for joint action at the level of the individual, the family and the community. A Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Safety (Geneva, 1983; WHO TRS No. 705, 1984) had recommended that food safety should be considered as an integral part of the PHC delivery system. This recommendation had to be seen in the light of the following facts: (i) food safety programmes in developed countries, as commonly carried out (e.g. through official food control) have failed to reduce the incidence of foodborne disease and (ii) in developing countries only a very small proportion of food is subject to any form of control, be it for health or for trade reasons. It was therefore obvious that the following actions were needed to respond to the recommendation of the Expert Committee on Food Safety:

- (i) education of consumers;
- (ii) training of food handlers and of people working with the community (e.g. community workers, nurses, agricultural extension workers and others);
- (iii) development of appropriate technologies; and
- (iv) intersectoral coordination.

43. The CAC had certain established mechanisms which could help implement these necessary actions and the paper under consideration made several proposals to this extent.

44. Several members of the Executive Committee felt that this paper had opened up a new dimension for the work of the Commission. What was however needed was a greater political will to reduce the health and economic consequences of contaminated food. The Coordinator for Africa referred to the fact that at the national level there was mainly no appropriate follow-up to recommendations, such as, for example, those contained in this paper. He mentioned that District Foci for Rural Development had been created in Kenya and that some of the recommendations would be applicable for these foci.

45. The Committee concluded by agreeing that the recommendations for actions needed by the CAC to help implement PHC, as contained in the secretariat paper, were realistic ones, but that additional recommendations would hopefully come up during the discussion of this topic in the forthcoming session of the Commission. It therefore recommended that the Commission fully discuss this paper.

Promotion of Acceptance or other implementation of Codex standards and Codex Maximum Limits for Pesticide Residues - Role for Codex Committee on General Principles (Agenda Item 7(iv))

46. The Executive Committee took note of the suggested topics and problems which might usefully be considered by the Codex Committee on General Principles in relation to promoting more acceptances and greater implementation of Codex standards and maximum limits for pesticide residues. These were set out in document ALINORM 85/40. The Executive Committee agreed to recommend to the Commission that the Codex Committee on General Principles could play a very useful role in promoting a greater degree of acceptance and implementation of Codex standards and maximum limits for pesticide residues through monitoring the extent to which they were being utilized in member countries. The Executive Committee also agreed to recommend to the Commission that it would be very desirable for the Codex Committee to meet before the Seventeenth Session of the Commission. The Secretariat informed the Executive Committee that the Host Government (France) had kindly agreed to convene such a meeting if that was the wish of the Commission and that a date had already been suggested for such a meeting.

Utilization of Codex Codes of Practice in Member Countries (Agenda Item 7(v))

47. The Executive Committee had before it ALINORM 85/41 on the above subject.

48. In discussing the future work programme of the Commission at its 31st Session, the Executive Committee had stressed the need for an intensified campaign for the acceptance, implementation and utilization of Codex standards and had also noted the importance of Codes of Practice and in particular Codes of Hygienic Practice in furthering the goal of protecting the health of the consumers:

49. Unlike Codex standards, Codes of Practice/Hygienic Practice were voluntary texts and were not subject to acceptance. It was therefore difficult to assess the result of the intended purposes, that is, to assist governments to ensure that foods are prepared under conditions of good manufacturing practice in particular under sound hygienic conditions and to facilitate international trade.

50. The Executive Committee had, therefore, "agreed that it would be appropriate to obtain information on how the Codes of Practice are used in Member Countries" (ALINORM 85/3 para 162).

51. In CL 1985/11 February 1985 governments were invited to supply information on the ways in which the Codex Codes of Practice are used in their countries both by regulatory authorities and by industry.

52. To date replies had been received from the following countries - Argentina, Cuba, Greece, Ireland, New Zealand, Netherlands, Norway and Thailand.

53. The Executive Committee noted that in general the replies showed that countries attached great importance to the Codes of Practice/Hygienic Practice for use in industry, by government regulatory authorities and in the drafting of new laws on foods. Where necessary some countries were translating the Codex into the national language before using them as instructions to Quality Control Services and Industry.

54. Other countries reported that they had fully accepted a large number of Codes of Practice.

55. The Executive Committee expressed its satisfaction with the positive reaction of governments to the usefulness of Codex Codes of Practice/Hygienic Practice in their countries. It was however regretted that comparatively few countries had so far replied to the Circular Letter.

56. The Executive Committee further recommended that reports on the utilization of the Codes be regularly reviewed through the Regional Coordinating Committees and requested in particular that Countries be encouraged to make some case studies on the effect of the Codes on improving their commodity distribution systems.

Assessment of Current and Likely Future Workloads of Codex Committees (Agenda Item 7(vi))

57. The Executive Committee had before it document ALINORM 85/42 which was introduced and commented upon by the Secretariat. The Executive Committee took note of the Secretariat's assessment of the current and likely future workloads of the various Codex Committees and expressed appreciation to the Secretariat for its views on this subject.

58. The Coordinator for Europe suggested that the Secretariat consider developing a programme for revising Codex standards, as some of them dated back to 1969.

59. The Representative of the Region of Latin America and the Caribbean referred to the Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes and sought clarification of the position concerning the development of standards for sorghum grains and flour. The Secretariat informed the Representative of that region that the Coordinating Committee for Africa, at its most recent session, had agreed that work on the standards which it was developing for these products (African Regional Standards) could be continued at a worldwide level by the Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes provided this work was taken up by that Committee at its next session. The Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes had indicated its willingness to undertake this task.

60. The Executive Committee agreed that the work of the Codex General Subject Committees and of the Regional Coordinating Committees was essentially ongoing. Concerning the views expressed by the Secretariat in regard to the various Codex Commodity Committees, the Executive Committee considered that these views could best be considered by the representatives of the host governments during the Commission's session.

Proposals of the International Dairy Federation (IDF) (Agenda Item 7(vii))

61. The Executive Committee had before it document ALINORM 85/17 which had been prepared by the IDF. The Secretariat introduced the document and outlined its main features. The document concluded by expressing the IDF's opinion that the Milk Committee should continue to meet at least every four years and that the Commission should reconsider its decision that after its 1986 session the Milk Committee should adjourn sine die. In introducing the paper, the Secretariat indicated that if the Commission were to decide not to adjourn the Milk Committee sine die but to agree to its meeting every four years, such meetings could be budgeted for out of Codex funds.

62. The Representative of the Region of North America stated that the North American Region supported an ongoing role for the Milk Committee with intervals of four years between sessions.

63. The Coordinator for Europe, stated that, in principle, he agreed with the view of the Representative of the Region of North America.

64. The Representative of the Region of South West Pacific stated that the South West Pacific Region supported the decision of the Commission that the Milk Committee should adjourn sine die. He stated that the meeting of the Milk Committee scheduled for 1986 could be agreed to but that, thereafter, there should be no further meetings of the Committee unless a member government is able to host the Committee.

Future Work and Other Matters (Agenda Items 7 (viii) and (ix))

65. The Representative of the Region of North America expressed the opinion that there was a need for the development of audio-visual material and other information on the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission which could be used in appropriate circumstances to inform governments, organizations and interested persons. Furthermore, consideration should be given to the preparation of a plan to implement the priorities resulting from the Commission's discussions of the future direction of the work. One way of promoting Codex activities would be for the Executive Committee to meet in non-Commission years in one of the Codex regions, possibly in conjunction with a Regional Coordinating Committee session.

66. The Executive Committee was informed that it had been proposed that the FAO Committee on Agriculture should, at its forthcoming session, have on its agenda the role of food quality control and standards in food security, health and trade.

67. The Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean suggested a number of measures to improve the work of the Commission. These include the development of a mechanism to facilitate participation by developing countries at Codex sessions, promotion of the acceptance by governments of Codex standards, reconsideration of the Commission's procedures, technical support for developing countries, guidelines on effective participation at Codex Coordinating Committees, mechanism for the dissemination of Codex documents and the holding of meetings to consider the needs of developing countries. The Coordinator further suggested that these ideas be considered by the Codex Committee on General Principles at its next session.

68. Dr. Brincker, Vice Chairman, was of the opinion that the question raised by the Codex Committee on Processed Meat and Poultry Products concerning the development of guidelines on the transmission of animal diseases through meat products in international trade could also be regarded as future work for the Commission, if the Commission agreed to commence such work.

69. Dr. Méndez, Vice Chairman, indicated that the residues and wastes originating from packaging materials used for foods had health implications and resulted in environmental contamination causing difficulties in international trade and might also be regarded as a future work for the Commission.

70. The Secretariat (Dr. Käferstein, WHO) suggested that, in the future, a separation of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling into one dealing with analysis and one dealing with sampling might be envisaged.

71. The Executive Committee took note of the above suggestions and decided to refer them to the Commission for more detailed consideration. The members of the Executive Committee were requested to give further thought to the question of future work and to convey their suggestions to the Commission during the discussion of this topic.

Certification of Products in Conformity with Codex Standards (Agenda Item 7(x))

72. The Executive Committee considered a paper summarizing action taken so far by the Commission and by the Executive Committee on the need for a system of certification of food products in conformity with Codex standards and on the use of a Codex Logo (mark or symbol) on the labels of food products in conformity with Codex standards. The Executive Committee recalled that, at its last Session, it had requested the Secretariat to issue a Circular Letter to governments asking them whether they thought that there was a need for a certification system, whether such a system should be an international or a national one and what matters should be covered in the certificates to be issued. It was also noted that only five governments had responded to the circular and that all but one considered that the establishment of a certification and inspection system was not necessary or feasible. One government (Thailand) was of the opinion that an international certification system would be useful and should be developed.

73. The Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean was of the opinion that the creation of an international certification system would be desirable, including the development of a suitable mark indicating compliance with Codex standards. He pointed out that ISO had in fact developed such a system. The Coordinator for Africa was of the opinion that it would be difficult to establish a system of certification since this required appropriate infrastructures. On the other hand, a system of certification of compliance would be beneficial especially to countries where food control infrastructures were lacking. Private organizations already existed for the purpose of providing certification of compliance. He expressed the opinion that the Codex should examine this matter further in the light of work done in this area by ISO. Dr. Hasan, Vice Chairman, shared these views and indicated that certification would be particularly useful in cases of dispute concerning the quality of the food product. The Coordinator for Europe was against the use of a Codex logo since, in the absence of effective control of food products to see if they were in compliance with Codex standards, a situation could be created which would be damaging to the image of FAO and WHO.

74. The Executive Committee noted the above views and agreed to refer them to the Commission for consideration.

VEGETABLE PROTEINS - SUBSTITUTION OF ORIGINAL PROTEIN WITH VEGETABLE PROTEIN PRODUCTS.
NAME OF THE PRODUCT (Agenda Item 8)

75. The Executive Committee had before it excerpts on the above subject from the following Codex Committees, Vegetable Proteins (CCVP) (ALINORM 85/30, paras 50-62 and Appendix II), Processed Meat and Poultry Products (CCMPP) (ALINORM 85/16, paras 178-207) and Food Labelling (CCFL) (ALINORM 85/22A, paras 232-240).

76. The Executive Committee recalled that at its 31st Session (ALINORM 85/3, paras 135-139) it had given an opinion on a matter referred to it by the CCVP, that is, where a name had been established for a food in a Codex standard could that name be used as part of the name of a food where some of the protein content of the food had been replaced by vegetable protein.

77. After discussion the Executive Committee had given as its opinion that it "agreed with the thoughts expressed in para. 63 of the Report of the 6th Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles, which, in substance, permitted the use of a name laid down in a Codex Standard as part of the name of another similar product not covered by the standard, provided that (i) the name was appropriately qualified, (ii) the section entitled 'General Principles' in the General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods was complied with, and (iii) the Scope section of the standard was taken fully into account."

78. At the 8th Session of the CCFL, during the endorsement of Labelling Provisions in Guidelines and Codes of Practice, the delegation of the United Kingdom said that it could not accept the view of the Executive Committee which seemed to allow for the substitution of up to 99% of the original protein in a product which was defined in a Codex standard. The United Kingdom therefore maintained its position as expressed at the Third Session of the Committee on Vegetable Protein Products that the names of products defined in Codex standards should be protected in the interests of consumers. The United Kingdom had no wish to restrict the use of VPP as substitutes but names of foods should properly reflect this fact. This view was supported by several delegations.

79. At both the CCVP and the CCMPP a number of delegations had taken the opposite viewpoint namely that partial substitution for the protein of animal protein products by VPP should be allowed under specified conditions.

80. Opinions were also divided in the CCFL and it was agreed to refer the matter to the Commission for further discussion.

81. The Representative of the Region of North America reminded the Executive Committee that the CCVP had been established based on the need to improve the diets of populations at nutritional risk; particularly where animal foods were in short supply and to give general guidance on the use of vegetable proteins in foods. The Utilization Guidelines under elaboration were voluntary texts and were intended to advise governments on the safe use, appropriate nutritional quality and accurate labelling of a wide range of food products containing VPP. He expressed the hope that at the forthcoming session of the Commission, developing countries would express their opinions so that the Commission could reach a consensus in order to enable the guidelines to be advanced as expeditiously as possible.

82. The Executive Committee noted that regulations on the inclusion of VPP in foods varied widely at the national level. It also noted the opinion which had been put forward during the Sixth Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (para. 63 of that Report) and which had been reflected in the report of the 31st Session of the Executive Committee, would suffice to cover the correct labelling of products where partial substitution of original protein with VPP had taken place, and would apply to the Guidelines being developed both by CCVP and CCPMP. The Executive Committee agreed that the Codex Alimentarius Commission should attempt to reach a consensus in regard to this issue.

Report on Discussions with ISO Concerning Possibility of Publication by ISO of Codex Standards (Agenda Item 9)

83. The Secretariat reported on recent discussions with ISO concerning the possibility of the publication by ISO of Codex standards. The Secretariat also brought to the attention of the Executive Committee the contents of a recent letter sent by the Assistant Secretary-General of ISO, Mr. L. Eicher, to the Codex Secretariat.

84. The Executive Committee was informed of the advantages both for the CAC and ISO which ISO saw in an arrangement under which ISO would publish Codex standards. The Executive Committee was also informed that ISO standards, unlike Codex standards, were priced publications, and that in order for Codex standards to become ISO, they would have to be adopted as ISO standards. Reference was made by the Secretariat to ISO Council Resolution 19/1984 which listed the preconditions for standards of other international standardizing bodies, such as the CAC, to be adopted as ISO standards.

85. The Coordinator for Europe pointed out that ISO was a non-governmental international organization. He thought that the publication by ISO of Codex standards as ISO standards could lead to difficulties or conflicting positions in that the ISO standards would be sent mainly to industry, which might approve of the standards without necessarily consulting the government ministry or ministries concerned.

86. The Coordinator for Africa stated that the CAC had a larger number of member countries than ISO. If the CAC had a more extensive distribution system, it would not be necessary for another organization to publish Codex standards. It was up to the national standardization and regulatory bodies to make the best use of the standards from both organizations.

87. The Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean recalled his discussions with the Secretary-General of ISO, who had stressed the advantages of ISO publishing the Codex standards.

88. The Secretariat indicated that the time had come for it to review the current arrangements for the distribution of Codex standards, codes of practice, etc. There appeared to be a need for decentralization of the existing distribution arrangements. Some Codex standards were likely to be extensively revised in the near future.

89. The Executive Committee recommended that the Secretariat should review its own distribution arrangements and report on progress to the next session of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee also recommended that the question of entering into arrangements for publication of Codex standards by another international organization should be held in abeyance pending completion of the review.

DISCUSSIONS WITH THE AFRICAN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STANDARDIZATION (Agenda Item 10)

90. The Secretariat informed the Executive Committee of discussions held with ARSO on ways of achieving collaboration between Codex and that intergovernmental organization in an effort to avoid duplication of work. In a recent communication to the Secretariat, ARSO had indicated its interest in harmonization of food standards at the African regional level and its intention to use Codex standards as the basis for African regional standards. However, in adopting Codex standards as ARSO standards there might be a need to adapt or modify them in order to take conditions in the African region into account. Like Codex, ARSO was anxious to avoid duplication of work at the African regional level.

91. The Coordinator for Africa pointed out that, under the circumstances, difficulties could arise if diverging regional standards for one and the same food product were established both by Codex and ARSO. Ideally governments and regional organizations should use Codex standards without further adoption and redrafting. Dr. Hasan, Vice Chairman, indicated that a similar situation existed in the region of Asia.

92. The Executive Committee requested the Secretariat to continue to pursue the matter of collaboration with ARSO in an attempt to avoid duplication of work. The Executive Committee stressed that the Codex Alimentarius Commission which had 129 member countries, including 40 in Africa, had been set up to deal specifically with standardization in the area of food and that it had now been working for 20 years in this field. The Executive Committee recommended, therefore, that ARSO should explore the possibility of not entering into that area. It was also agreed that member states of the region of Africa should be made aware of the problems which may arise in this area.

PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE OF CODEX SESSIONS FOR 1986/87 (Agenda Item 11)

93. The Executive Committee took note of the provisional timetable of Codex sessions for 1986/87, contained in document ALINORM 85/45. The Secretariat clarified a number of the comments contained in the footnotes in the document. The Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean referred to the possibility of linking the next session of the Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean and of the Codex Committee on Vegetable Proteins. The Executive Committee noted that there would be discussions between the authorities concerned. The Executive Committee had no specific comments to make on the provisional timetable of Codex sessions for 1986/87, other than to express appreciation to the host governments concerned.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE REPORTS OF CODEX COMMITTEES (Agenda Item 12)

Codex Committee on Processed Meat and Poultry Products (CCPMPP)

Guidelines for the Prevention of Transmission of Animal Diseases through Meat Products in International Trade

94. The Executive Committee had before it a background document on the above subject prepared by the Chairman of the CCPMPP as a result of the discussions which had taken place at the 13th Session of that Committee (ALINORM 85/16, paras. 257-262).

95. The Executive Committee noted that there had been little time to study the document and decided to forward it for consideration in greater detail to the Commission.

OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 13)

96. None.