



## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EUROPE

Thirty-third Session

Berlin, Germany

27 - 31 May 2024

### MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES

#### MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 45<sup>th</sup> and 46<sup>th</sup> SESSIONS OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION (CAC45 and CAC46) AND ITS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (CCEXEC82, CCEXEC83, CCEXEC84 and CCEXEC85)

##### Standards and related texts adopted by the Commission<sup>1</sup>

1. CAC45 (2022) adopted the consequential amendment to the *Regional Standard for Chanterelles* (CXS 40R-1981), Section 8.2, labelling of non-retail containers, to align with the *General Standard for the Labelling of Non-retail Containers of Foods* (CXS 346-2021).
2. CAC46 (2023) adopted the revised food additive provision to the GSFA for alignment of the *Regional Standard for Chanterelles* (CXS 40R-1981).

##### Appointments and elections<sup>2</sup>

3. CAC45 (2022) appointed Germany as Coordinator for Europe to hold office from the end of CAC45 until the end of the first regular session of the Commission following the next session of CCEURO (i.e. CAC47).
4. Following the appointment of Germany as Coordinator for Europe and consequently stepping down from its role as Member for Europe elected on a geographic basis, CAC45 elected Finland as the Member for Europe to complete the current term (until the end of CAC46).
5. CAC46 (2023) re-elected Finland as Member for Europe elected on a geographic basis for the period from the end of CAC46 to the end of CAC48.

##### Webcasting<sup>3</sup>

6. At CAC46 (2023) the Coordinator for Europe highlighted that CCEURO32 had requested the Codex Secretariat to further explore the possibility of webcasting Codex meetings, including CCEXEC, and to bring this to the attention of the Commission. However, due to time constraints, CAC45 could not discuss this topic.
7. CAC46 noted the interest in webcasting of CCEXEC and requested the Codex Secretariat to further explore this issue considering the existing practices in other similar FAO bodies, and to present a paper at CAC47 (2024).

##### Codex budgetary and financial matters<sup>4</sup>

8. CAC46 (2023) urged Members to advocate with their government representatives to FAO and WHO for adequate funding for the Codex programme.
9. CAC46 noted the increasing difficulty of delivering the Codex work plan, thanked Members already contributing extra-budgetary resources to Codex, and encouraged Members to consider extra-budgetary

<sup>1</sup> REP22/CAC paragraph 153; REP23/CAC paragraph 61(vi)

<sup>2</sup> REP22/CAC paragraph 215 and 217; REP23/CAC paragraph 222.

<sup>3</sup> REP23/CAC paragraphs 178 and 190(iii)

<sup>4</sup> REP23/CAC paragraph 214(v,vii)

funding of the ongoing project to increase accessibility to Codex texts in the six official languages and work on monitoring the use and impact of Codex texts.

Application of the Statements of Principle concerning the role of science in the Codex decision-making process and the extent to which other factors are taken into account (SoP)<sup>5</sup>

10. CCEXEC83 (2022) agreed to forward the proposed text on the “Guidance for Codex Chairpersons and Members on the application of the Statements of Principle concerning the role of Science in the Codex decision making process and the extent to which other factors are taken into account” to CAC45 for its further consideration.

11. CAC45 (2022) endorsed the proposal of CCEXEC83 to refer the draft guidance to the Chairpersons of Codex subsidiary bodies to facilitate deliberations on matters that fell within the scope of the SoP, and urged Members to take account of the draft guidance as appropriate during the process of standards development and advancement.

12. CAC46 (2023) reiterated its previous conclusion that the draft guidance remained serviceable and available as practical guidance for Chairpersons of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies and for Members in situations when there is agreement on science but differing views on other factors/considerations. CAC46 also agreed on the need to gain more experience on application of the draft guidance, and to revisit the draft guidance in the light of experience gained.

Future of Codex<sup>6</sup>

13. CCEXEC85 (2023) agreed that rather than develop a blueprint for the future of Codex, it was more appropriate to use the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 to guide the future direction of Codex and to consider, in parallel, a working model for future Codex work; and that the document (i.e. CX/EXEC 23/85/3, Appendix II) describing the key elements of a model for future Codex work remained a living document that should be periodically reviewed in light of experiences and learnings.

14. CAC46 (2023) endorsed the conclusions of CCEXEC85 regarding matters pertaining to the blueprint on the future of Codex.

Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031<sup>7</sup>

15. CCEXEC84 (2023) recommended taking into account the lessons learnt from the development and implementation of the monitoring framework for the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 when developing the monitoring framework for the Strategic Plan 2026-2031.

16. CCEXEC85 (2023) discussed the first draft of the elements to be included in the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 and agreed to send a Circular Letter (CL) to Members and Observers requesting comments on these elements. CCEXEC85 further agreed that the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons should hold informal consultations with Members and Observers to encourage interaction, discussion and reflection, and to support Members and Observers in responding to the CL.

17. CAC46 (2023) endorsed the conclusions of CCEXEC85 regarding matters pertaining to the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031.

New Food Sources and Production Systems (NFPS)<sup>8</sup>

18. CAC46 (2023) highlighted the importance of addressing challenges posed by NFPS and the important role Codex could play in this, noted that the current working mechanisms were adequate to address any new work on NFPS that Members might propose, and encouraged Members to submit discussion papers or new work proposals, either to active Codex committees or to the Executive Committee through the Codex Secretariat.

Regional standards<sup>9</sup>

19. CCEXEC85 (2023) in addressing the challenges with application of the criteria for regional standards in the context of regional needs, indicated that regardless of whether a commodity was traded internationally or not, a proposal for new work for either a regional or worldwide standard could be submitted from Regional Coordinating Committees (RCCs) to CCEXEC for critical review, and to CAC for final approval and decision on the nature of the standard and by whom it should be developed.

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<sup>5</sup> REP22/EXEC2 paragraphs 81-84; REP22/CAC paragraph 22(iv, v); REP23/CAC paragraph 194(ii, vi, vii)

<sup>6</sup> REP23/EXEC2 paragraph 38; REP23/CAC paragraph 16

<sup>7</sup> REP23/EXEC1 paragraph 115; REP23/EXEC2 paragraphs 40-47, 54(i(a), ii); REP23/CAC paragraph 16

<sup>8</sup> REP23/CAC paragraph 206(i, ii, iii)

<sup>9</sup> REP23/EXEC2 paragraph 92(ii,iii)

20. CCEXEC85 also indicated that RCCs (and proponents of new work) should prepare well researched and complete discussion papers/proposals for new work, which would facilitate the role of CCEXEC and enable it to advise CAC accordingly on a possible way forward.

21. CCEXEC85 recommended that the Codex Secretariat work to prepare practical guidance as well as engage with Members to address the challenges related to new work and work prioritization, as recommended by CCEXEC83.

#### New standards or review of standards and guidelines<sup>10</sup>

22. At the request of the WHO representative, CCEXEC83 (2022) agreed to request that Codex committees, when prioritizing and undertaking work on new standards or the review of standards and guidelines relating to composition of foods, have due regard to ongoing global efforts to achieve health and nutrition related goals through reducing non-communicable diseases (NCD) risk factors such as sodium intake.

### **MATTERS ARISING FROM OTHER SUBSIDIARY BODIES**

#### **26th Session of Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and certification (CCFICS26)**<sup>11</sup>

23. CCFICS26 (2023) agreed to inform other Codex Committees about the review and update of the *Principles for Traceability / Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification System* (CXG 60-2006)<sup>12</sup>.

#### **33rd Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP33)**<sup>13</sup>

24. CCGP33 (2023) following its discussion on update to the Guide to the procedures for the amendment and revision of Codex standards and related texts in the Procedural Manual, agreed to inform other Codex committees of the ongoing work in this regard to better align with current practices in Codex and international publishing standards.

25. CCGP33 agreed to ask the host secretariats to review the procedures in section 3 of the PM, Guidelines for subsidiary bodies, to identify text to be updated, in line with current practices; and to request the Codex Secretariat to circulate any proposed changes for comments by the Members.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

26. CCEURO33 is invited to:

- i. note the information presented above;
- ii. encourage Members to actively contribute to the discussions in CCEXEC and CAC (e.g. sharing experience on application of the draft guidance on the application of the SoP, and providing inputs on the development of Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031); and
- iii. note the encouragement to submit discussion papers or new work proposals on NFPS using existing mechanisms.

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<sup>10</sup> REP22/EXEC2, paragraph 154 (v)

<sup>11</sup> REP23/FICS paragraph 117(c); REP23/CAC paragraph 87

<sup>12</sup> This proposal for new work was approved by CAC46

<sup>13</sup> REP23/GP paragraphs 36(ii) and 69(iv)