



## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

### CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD LABELLING

#### Forty-fourth Session

Asunción, Paraguay, 16 – 20 October 2017

### MATTERS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY THE CAC AND OTHER CODEX SUBSIDIARY BODIES

#### BIOPESTICIDES, BIOFERTILIZERS AND BIOSTIMULANTS

(Prepared by Chile)

#### Introduction

1. According to the current Strategic Plan of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) 2017-2019, in the Strategic Objective 1, the objective 1.2 is to actively identify emerging issues and the necessities of members, and, where appropriate, to develop food standards or related texts.

#### Backgrounds

2. In the last session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC40), the Chilean delegation requested the Commission guidelines about the way in which the current lack of definitions regarding biopesticides, biofertilizers and biostimulants (CAC/40 CRD 28) should be addressed.

3. The main deliberations made by the Members and Observers at CAC40 were the following:

*(i) countries already had or were starting to develop national legislation, which could benefit from international guidance;*

*(ii) these substances were increasingly being used as an alternative to or to complement traditional agricultural practices, yet sufficient scientific assessments still have to be made to ensure their safety;*

*(iii) clear definitions of these substances and their safe use and appropriate residue levels should be addressed; and*

*(iv) the technical nature of the issue required considered in specialized subsidiary bodies of the Commission.*

4. After the discussion, the Commission acknowledged the relevance of the issue and supported the proposal; and recommended Chile to submit a discussion paper for consideration by Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL), Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) and the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF).

#### The Problem

5. Currently, agriculture is facing the challenge of complying with a growing demand for food, ensuring food for the entire population; as well as, it shall be more efficient in the use natural resources.

6. This challenge is reflected in the recent international commitments of the Agenda 2030, which is structured through 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Among them, the SDG 2 refers explicitly to sustainability of food production systems, SDG 3, in its goal 9, suggests to considerably reduce by 2030 the number of deaths and diseases caused by dangerous chemical products and the water, air and soil pollution and contamination: and finally, the SDG 12, in its goal 4, details the commitment to achieve a rational ecologic management of chemical products, and to reduce significantly its release in the atmosphere, water and soil, in order to reduce its adverse effects in human health and the environment.

7. In relation to pesticides of synthetic chemical origin, the global regulatory scenario and scientific evidence, the number of restrictions to the use of such products is increasing, both in terms of their authorization, as well as the maximum residue limits allowed in food and feed, as a result of a growing concern on public health, expressed by international organizations scientific evidence on a number of categories of hazards of agrochemicals, consumers and several risk assessment and risk management agencies worldwide.

8. This situation has encouraged the development of new products for plant protection and nutrition of biological origin based on microorganisms such as bacteria, algae, protozoa, viruses and fungi, nature identical

substances such as pheromones or semi-chemicals, macro organisms and invertebrates such as insects and nematodes, as well as botanical extracts. The use of this type of products is increasing in global agriculture as a complement or alternative to the use of traditional pesticides.

9. Notwithstanding the development of Biopesticides, Biofertilizers and Bioestimulants (also known as Bioinputs) in recent decades, the scientific and technical literature is not clear regarding the formal definitions of these concepts, nor is the translation of these types of products in other languages. Internationally, there are also no guidelines by international or multilateral institutions regarding a standardization of minimum regulatory requirements for these types of products.

10. Continuing with the same patterns of production, energy and consumption is not possible anymore, therefore, it is very important to establish the framework for action for these products, in order to make progress towards a more sustainable agriculture that allows to rationalize the use of traditional agrochemicals. This would contribute to the compliance of the agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development of the United Nations (SDG 2, SDG 3 and SDG 12).

11. Although no problems have been detected in trade or food safety on this subject internationally, it is not ruled out that they might appear in the future, due to the different regulatory initiatives that are currently being developed in different countries to address the use and food safety of such products.

12. It has been noted that the guidelines provided by Codex Alimentarius in relation to these types of inputs are only for organic agriculture, as mentioned in "Guidelines for the Production, Processing, Labeling and Marketing of Organically Produced Foods (GL 32-99)" developed by Codex Committee on Food Labeling (CCFL).

### **Objective**

13. Finally, and following the mandate of CAC, CCFL is requested to provide guidance on how to address the necessity of organizing and harmonizing definitions and scope of terms, recommendations and/or requirements on Biopesticides, Biofertilizers or Bioestimulants (Bioinputs), as well as on the possibility that the Committee considers appropriate to develop such recommendations through Guidelines.