

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 5,6,7.1,7.2 and 8

ASIA21/CRD15

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR ASIA

Twenty-first Session

Goa, India 23 - 27 September 2019

Comments of India

Agenda 5: MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES

Matters for Action:

Other subsidiary bodies

77th Session of the Executive Committee (CCEXEC77)

Committee on Processed Fruits and Vegetables (CCPFV)

Comment: We strongly support activating work on cashew kernels to enable progression of the proposed work. We are also willing to chair any future working group if established to develop a standard on cashew kernels.

Agenda 6: CODEX WORK RELEVANT TO THE REGION

Specific Comments:

Paragraph 21

Para 21 (i): We appreciate the SOP prepared by the coordinator and support its adoption as an informal document for use by CCASIA for further strengthening the region.

Para 21 (ii): We suggest following approaches with respect to each:

- **Capacity development in collection and generation of scientific data** – Regional Collaboration/mutual support for generation of scientific data in respect of contaminants/residue levels in foods for further submission to risk assessment bodies so as to represent the region in more inclusive manner e.g. collaborative projects on data generation may be undertaken through sharing of expertise and/or funds.
- **Reporting and sharing of information/ coordination in respect of economically motivated adulteration and food fraud-** Information with respect to incidences of food fraud should be shared among countries through common online platform so as to ensure required preparedness combating such incidences of dynamic nature. India suggests that existing online platform on national food control system may be used for reporting food fraud incidences.
- **Development of regional positions in the context of e-commerce-** The prevalence and the status of e-commerce activities in the respective countries may be analysed and shared among the member countries so that the regional positions with respect to regulating such activities may be developed. These positions may further be utilised in the context of ongoing work on e-Commerce.

Para 21 (iv): Explore possibilities of mutual communications and sharing of relevant data/scientific expert advice with other countries

Comments:We suggest encouraging countries to jointly prepare and submit new work proposals on areas of common interest, including data/information/scientific advice sharing; participating in training programmes facilitated by FAO/WHO for capacity development, for eg- STDF projects

We also suggest utilizing the SOP prepared for improving regional collaboration including development of regional positions, wherein all aspects as mentioned above are included.

Agenda 7.1: MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2019

Paragraph 4.1 (ii)

Comment: We believe that to improve the response to status of implementation of the global strategic plan, the questionnaire could be further simplified with the use of simple language, use of objective questions instead of detailed subjective type questions with possible answers in “partially, completely etc.” It will be helpful if notes and explanations are included in the questionnaire to further simplify the process.

An example to cite in this case is the “FAO/WHO Diagnostic tool for assessing status of national codex programmes”, which includes explanatory notes, as to what is asked, what is expected etc. Therefore, a questionnaire in the form similar to that of the Diagnostic tool can be utilized as a tool to inform the final status report for the period 2014-2019 and can be used in the future if agreed.

Appendix II

Based on the information and statistical data presented in Appendix II, CCASIA is invited to consider the following questions for discussion:

1. What are your criteria for selecting EWGs?

Comments:

- Global issues impacting consumer health and safety like issues around growing NCD, Malnutrition etc. which will enable larger consensus and greater acceptability and enhance participation.
- Request should be with consensus of member countries keeping in view fair-trade facilitation and food safety concerns.
- Focus on priorities of developing countries to address their concerns and enhance participation.

2. What is your strategy for monitoring which EWGs are established by CAC or its subsidiary bodies? How do you monitor new developments in EWGs you signed up to?

- Timely access to all documents and circulars amongst EWG members.
- Selecting the appropriate members and experts with right knowledge to engage in the EWG.
- EWG should ensure that as far as possible membership is representative of stakeholders.
- Every NCCP may evaluate the need to form nodal agency for each working group that they have opted to be member.
- Nodal agency may be asked to facilitate and coordinate required data generation on the relevant issues.

3. How are you organized internally for participating in an EWG (e.g. work flow, authorization, collaboration)?

Comment: The CCP India monitors the work related to an EWG, coordinates with relevant stakeholders and requests nominations for participation in the EWG. Experts are selected based on the subject matter expertise (specific to the EWG area) and with relevant knowledge of codex activities. Meetings are arranged as required with the relevant members and experts of the working group. The CCP is responsible for reviewing and authorizing comments.

4. How successful do you think your participation in EWGs is and why?

Comment: India has been quite successful in participating and engaging in some of the working groups like EWG on FOPNL, EWG on GSFA, EWG on note 161 related to sweetener, EWG on alignment of food additives, EWG related to CCPR etc.

5. Which actions do you think are needed to enhance your participation in EWGs on priority subjects for your country?

- Encourage effective participation of relevant stakeholders within country by highlighting the importance of codex standards in facilitating fair trade practices.
- Effort is required to identify and empower nodal agencies for each working group to ensure better coordination and engagement with members.
- Capacity building to engage MSMEs, SMEs and academia engagement in codex activities

Agenda 7.2: CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025 – ROADMAP TO IMPLEMENTATION

Priority goals/ objectives	Activities to be implemented to support achievement of the prioritized objective and goal by CCASIA and Member Countries	How these activities will contribute to the achievement of the strategic plan	Responsible or lead party
Goal 1: Address current, emerging and critical issues in a timely manner			
Objective 1.1: Identify needs and emerging issues.;	Activity 1: Encourage members (through various mechanisms) to clearly identify emerging and critical issues, either through regional committees or other subsidiary bodies	1: Members can be advocated to understand the importance of this goal and providing inputs through various subsidiary committees encouraged to provide inputs	All
	Activity 2: Develop mechanism to draw information on emerging and critical issues through workshops/physical meetings/ high level meetings	2: Workshops/Physical meetings between Committee meetings (including RCCs), with dedicated time and agenda may result in proper response from member countries (responsible party should be: FAO & WHO)	Members
Objective 1.2: Prioritize needs and emerging issues.	Activity 1: Assessment of all committees for proposed new work proposals/ progress of ongoing proposals	1: This activity is required for measuring the said indicators	CAC/Codex Secretariat
	Activity 2: Actively engage in putting up new work proposals and providing inputs for progressing new work to address the identified issues Activity 3: Inclusion of standing agenda on i) emerging and critical issues and ii) Work prioritization in all Codex committees Activity 4: Strengthen the critical review process to improve standards monitoring	2: This activity is required to make sure that work is progressed wrt identified critical and emerging issues 3: This will ensure the importance of this goal is recognized and does not go overlooked 4: It will help in identifying the gaps in Codex standard setting and will enhance timely response to emerging issues	All Codex Secretariat
Goal 2: Develop standards based on science and Codex risk-analysis principles.			CCEXEC

<p>Objective 2.2: Promote the submission and use of globally representative data in developing and reviewing Codex standards.</p>	<p>Activity 1: Assessment of total number of member countries responding to call for data</p> <p>Activity 2: Develop mechanism to encourage and enable member countries to submit data in response to calls for data</p> <p>Activity 3: Develop a process for generating robust data via collaborative data generation projects (work sharing and cost sharing)</p> <p>Activity 4: Assessment of data submitted by member countries to classify it as truly representative data</p> <p>Activity 5: Encourage FAO and WHO to support programs aimed at enhancing the capacity of developing countries to generate, collect and submit data.</p>	<p>1: Such an assessment will help provide a picture of number of submissions from the member countries</p> <p>2: This will help improve submissions</p> <p>3: This will ensure submission of quality data, which can be truly called representative data</p> <p>5: More geographically represented data would be generated including data from developing and least developing countries</p>	<p>FAO/WHO</p> <p>FAO/WHO</p> <p>Member Countries</p> <p>FAO/WHO</p> <p>Codex Committees</p>
<p>Goal 4: Facilitate the participation of all Codex Members throughout the standard setting process</p>			
<p>Objective 4.1: Enable sustainable national Codex structures in all Codex Member Countries.</p>	<p>Activity 4.1.1: Periodic assessment of national codex structures through the Diagnostic tool. The results can be included in the agenda on "Use of Codex standards in the region" under the RCCs appropriately</p> <p>Activity 4.1.2: Conducting High level workshops for involving policy makers/decision makers on the importance of national codex structures</p>	<p>1. Assessment results will be helpful in analysing the status of national codex structures and inclusion of these in the agenda will be helpful for monitoring purpose.</p> <p>Responsible (FAO/WHO/Codex secretariat)</p> <p>2. This will ensure political commitment and dedicated funding as well as manpower for participation in codex work</p> <p>Responsible (FAO/WHO/Codex secretariat)</p>	<p>Member Countries</p> <p>Member Countries</p>

<p>Objective 4.3: Reduce barriers to active participation by developing Countries.</p>	<p>Activity 4.3.1: Encourage Members to support developing and transition economy countries with capacity building programmes through joint projects or FAO/WHO facilitated efforts</p> <p>Activity 4.3.2- Initiate mentorship/ partnership programmes among countries for identifying and addressing specific Codex issues</p>	<p>1. Through joint or collaborative projects, experts from one member country may provide training to other countries wrt active participation in codex work. Such trainings have been conducted in our region wherein experts from one country imparted training to other member countries. (FAO/WHO may facilitate such collaborations)</p> <p>2. Such programs will be helpful to the countries in identifying and prioritizing areas of concerns, thus motivating the countries to participate in Codex activities. (FAO/WHO may facilitate such collaborations; member countries may also initiate such programmes)</p>	<p>All</p> <p>Regional Coordinator</p>

Agenda 8: CODEX COMMUNICATIONS WORK PLAN

Comments: We support and agree with the proposed Regional work plan (news stories specific reference to news related to Codex).