

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

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Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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REP17/NASWP

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Fortieth Session

CICG, Geneva, Switzerland

17 – 22 July 2017

REPORT OF THE FORTEENTH SESSION OF THE FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NORTH AMERICA AND THE SOUTH WEST PACIFIC

Port Vila, Vanuatu

19 – 22 September 2016

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SUMMARY AND STATUS OF WORK					
Responsible Party	Purpose	Text/Topic	Code	Step	Para.
Vanuatu / New Zealand/ Australia CCEXEC73 CAC40 CCNASWP15	Approval	New work on development of a regional standard for kava as a beverage when mixed with cold water.	-	1/2/3	76
CAC40	Appointment	Recommended that Vanuatu be re-appointed as Coordinator for North America and the South West Pacific.	-	-	77
EWG (Tonga) CCNASWP15	Redrafting	Proposed draft regional standard for fermented noni juice	-	2/3	69
CCEXEC73	Information	Agreed to discontinue monitoring and reporting of Strategic Plan for CCNASWP 2014 – 2019.			55
CAC Chair and vice Chairs	Information	Considered that the four goals of the Codex Strategic Plan 2014 – 2019 were still valid and relevant for the new Strategic Plan; but were not in a position to provide comments on Objectives at the present session.			58 – 59
CCCF	Request for advice / information	The work on the regional standard for fermented noni juice is still ongoing and safety assessment of scopoletin is still needed.	-	-	68
Members	Information	CCNASWP members are urged to provide to JECFA data on safety / toxicity of scopoletin	-	-	68
FAO/WHO Members	Information	Discussion on Item 3 is an important first step for identifying issues and priorities for the region.	-	-	26
	Information	Asked FAO and WHO to take account of the suggestions made in the continued development of the online platform for information sharing on food quality and safety systems.			31
	Information	Suggested to expand the scope of the survey on the use of Codex standards to a category of standards of critical interest to the region.			39
	Information	Urged CCNASWP Members to follow the discussion and actively contribute to the work on a number of Codex work of interest to the region.			48

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AMR	Antimicrobial Resistance
CAC	Codex Alimentarius Commission
CCCF	Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods
CCEXEC	Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission
CCFH	Codex Committee on Food Hygiene
CCFICS	Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems
CCFL	Codex Committee on Food Labelling
CCNASWP	FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and the South West Pacific
CCNFSDU	Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses
CCPR	Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues
CRD	Conference Room Document
EWG	Electronic Working Group
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GSCTFF	General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed
GSFA	General Standard for Food Additives
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
IESTI	International Estimated Short-Term Intake
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IHR	International Health Regulation
IT	Information Technology
MRL	Maximum Residue Limit
JECFA	Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives
NCD	Non-communicable Disease
PHAMA	Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access
PICs	Pacific Island Countries
RCCs	Regional Coordinating Committees
RCM	Regional Committee Meeting
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDS	Small Island Developing State
WHO	World Health Organization

INTRODUCTION

1. The FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and the South West Pacific (CCNASWP) held its 14th Session in Port Vila, from 19 to 22 September 2016, at the kind invitation of the Government of Vanuatu. Mr Timothy Tumukon, Director, Department of Biosecurity Vanuatu, chaired the session, which was attended by delegates from eleven Member countries, two Member countries outside the Region and one international organization. A complete list of participants, including FAO, WHO and the Secretariats, is given in Appendix I.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

2. Honourable Joe Natuman, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade, Commerce, Tourism and Cooperatives of Vanuatu, welcomed the participants and opened the session. In his opening remarks ([CRD4](#)), the Deputy Prime Minister highlighted the issues of serious concern that were affecting SIDS, including: foodborne diseases, the impact of the appropriate level of protection on SIDS trading capabilities and the prevalence of NCDs.
3. In concluding, the Deputy Prime Minister acknowledged the kind assistance of Papua New Guinea and PHAMA programme in preparing the session and member governments for supporting the participation of delegates.
4. Mr Graham Nimoho, Assistant FAO Representative (Programme) for Vanuatu, addressed the delegates on behalf of FAO and WHO and thanked Vanuatu for hosting this session of CCNASWP. In his speech ([CRD5](#)), the Assistant Representative emphasised the importance of participation in Codex for countries in the region and the value of science-based Codex standards for food safety and food security domestically and internationally.
5. Ms Awilo Ochieng Pernet, CAC Chairperson, also addressed the delegates. In her speech ([CRD6](#)), the CAC Chairperson noted that effective implementation of Codex standards ensured consumer health protection and also enabled access of national products to regional and international food markets. She also emphasized the important role played by Codex towards achieving several United Nations SDGs.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda Item 1)¹

6. The Coordinating Committee adopted the Provisional Agenda as its Agenda for the session and agreed to consider items 3a and 3b together.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS ON THE MULTI-SECTORAL ASPECTS OF CODEX AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR STRENGTHENING CODEX AS A MEANS TO CONTRIBUTE TO DEVELOPMENT OF THE ECONOMIC, TRADE, AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND NUTRITION SECTORS (Agenda Item 2)²

7. The Representative of FAO, on behalf of FAO and WHO, introduced this item by calling the Coordinating Committee's attention to the ongoing process of revitalization being undertaken across all RCCs. The inclusion of a keynote address was a key activity within the "Revitalization" process and aimed to stimulate discussion and information sharing on a topic of interest to the region.
8. His Excellency Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Livestock of Papua New Guinea, Assik Tommy Tomscoll delivered the keynote address on the multi-sectorial aspects of Codex and opportunities for strengthening Codex as a means to contribute to development of the economic, trade, agriculture, health and nutrition sector ([Appendix II](#)).
9. CCNASWP Members noted that Codex standards were important in protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in trade in the region. They underlined the importance of Codex for food safety and quality, food security, nutrition (NCDs and micronutrient deficiency) and for the harmonization of food standards. The importance of effective participation to maximize the benefits of Codex was emphasized. SIDS could leverage the collective strength from Codex and the region, through opportunities provided by information sharing and networking across sectors and borders. It was also recognized that although there were differences in the level of development of food safety and quality systems, there were also common challenges across the NASWP region.
10. CCNASWP Members highlighted the need to implement Codex standards to address a range of issues including NCDs, dependence on imported foods and the impact of climate change on food security. Codex work could also impact positively on consumers, tourism and education sectors and a better understanding of the relationships between food safety and food security would facilitate greater policy coherence.

¹ [CX/NASWP 16/14/1](#)

² [CX/NASWP 16/14/2](#)

11. The Chairperson of CAC stated she was looking for Codex champions, people like Minister Tomscoll, who are committed to protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair trade, to personally assist by advocating with and informing other Ministers on the importance of food safety and Codex at meetings and conferences and to put food safety and Codex high on the political agenda.

Conclusion

12. The Representatives of FAO and WHO concluded that Codex is important to the region as it provides the opportunity to raise the profile of food quality and safety at high political level and provides an opportunity to bring countries together to identify common issues and the means to address them at national, regional and global level.
13. To benefit from these opportunities the Coordinating Committee recognized the importance of effectively participating in Codex focusing on key priorities and working together across sectors and borders to address common issues.

FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY SITUATION IN THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION (Agenda Item 3a)³

PRIORITIZATION OF THE NEEDS OF THE REGION AND POSSIBLE APPROACHES TO ADDRESS THEM (Agenda Item 3b)⁴

14. The Representative of FAO, on behalf of FAO and WHO, informed the Coordinating Committee that this agenda item was a new way to facilitate a targeted discussion on critical and emerging food safety issues and priorities in the region. The agenda item formed part of the revitalization process of RCCs and, specifically, the request by CAC38, to FAO/WHO with the Codex Secretariat to develop a set of questions on issues and priorities in countries and prepare an analysis of the information collected to provide a global overview of commonalities and differences on critical and emerging issues.

Discussion

15. CCNASWP Members appreciated the initiative by FAO and WHO to identify critical and emerging issues and priorities; highlighted the important role Codex plays in addressing these issues, but also acknowledged that the work of Codex needs to be complemented by other initiatives at national and regional level and that Codex work is instrumental in protecting the health of consumers and facilitating fair trade.
16. CCNASWP Members shared experiences on how Codex standards and guidelines have been adopted into national legislation and contributed to strengthening harmonization of food safety and quality measures across countries in the region; and on the ongoing efforts to address some of the issues raised, e.g. ensuring robust food safety systems, targeted training and education, strengthening controls for imported foods including date marks; and on challenges for ensuring implementation and compliance with national legislation. It was recognized that high level political support was needed to strengthen food safety and quality and that Codex could play an important advocacy role to obtain such support.
17. While CCNASWP Members acknowledged the results of the questionnaire and the most cited priorities, a number of them referred to other issues, which remain important including food security, food defence, science and public perception, AMR, more sensitive detection methods in food analysis and implementation of non-scientific measures in the control of imported food. Although the NASWP region is very diverse, it was acknowledged that several critical and emerging issues were common across the region, e.g. food and diet related NCD risk factors.
18. The need for Codex to strengthen its work on addressing the nutrition challenges in the region, either through CCNASWP or other Codex committees, was mentioned. In this regard, the Representative of WHO encouraged Codex to consider FAO and WHO policies, strategies and guidelines in relation to its work. Examples mentioned were the WHO guidelines on sodium intake for adults and children and the guideline on sugar intake in adults and children, which may inform action to address the nutrition challenge. It was further noted that 'front of pack' labelling had served as an important measure to address NCDs and that implementation of Codex standards on food labelling in general could help consumers make healthier food choices.
19. CCNASWP Members also noted the importance of establishing robust national food import control systems including a single window approach with health, customs and biosecurity at the border as well as addressing specific elements of climate change that may impact on food safety.

³ [CX/NASWP 16/14/3](#); CX/NASWP 16/14/3 Add.1; FAO and WHO capacity building activities in the Pacific ([CRD1](#))

⁴ [CX/NASWP 16/14/4](#); FAO and WHO capacity building activities in the Pacific ([CRD1](#))

20. Appreciation was expressed for the ongoing technical support from FAO and WHO in addressing critical and emerging issues, while acknowledging that there might be opportunities for identifying additional synergies between the work of the two organizations to address priorities at country level.
21. It was acknowledged that further analysis of the responses to the questionnaire was required in order to determine the priorities for the region; to determine those issues which are within the work programme of FAO, WHO and Codex, and those which could be better addressed through other mechanisms at national or regional level. The need to continue the dialogue and exchange of ideas to determine suitable action to address identified critical and emerging issues and priorities, including continued discussion at the next CCNASWP, was highlighted.
22. The Secretariat informed the Coordinating Committee that a paper would be prepared, in collaboration with FAO and WHO, on the implementation of the "Revitalization" process in all RCCs for the upcoming CCEXEC73, thus giving further opportunity to Members to provide feedback on the "Revitalization" process and on the different activities undertaken.

Conclusion

23. The Coordinating Committee:
 - Agreed that the discussion was an important first step and beneficial for identifying critical and emerging issues and priorities for the region and expressed appreciation to FAO and WHO for facilitating the process by preparing the analysis and background papers.
 - Noted that the overall most frequently identified issues were: (i) robust national food control systems; (ii) issues related to food supply; (iii) issues related to climate change; (iv) food safety capacities, awareness, training and education; and (v) nutrition challenges.
 - Highlighted the importance of CCNASWP members taking appropriate action at national level to address these priority issues. However, it was also acknowledged that some priorities might need regional attention in addition to national focus.
 - Recommended further analysis to identify the priorities for the region, and how to address the identified priority issues within the national and regional Codex programme of work, noting that specific work on the identified priorities could be referred to the appropriate Codex committees for consideration for new work. The opportunity of creating synergies between the capacity development work of FAO and WHO and the identified priority issues was acknowledged as a way forward.

On line platform for information sharing on food safety control systems

24. The Representative of FAO, on behalf of FAO and WHO, introduced the topic and explained that the set of questions included in the platform⁵ had been chosen based on the premise that countries would see a value in sharing and using the information. A secondary use of the information shared through the platform would be through FAO and WHO capacity development programmes.
25. CCNASWP Members were asked to provide feedback on whether they supported continuation of work, the usefulness of the current questions included and to advise on any other questions to include, or other aspects to be considered in further development of the platform.

Discussion

26. CCNASWP Members expressed support for the intent of the platform that was both useful and user friendly. The usefulness of having a sustained, reference point on line was mentioned. Clarification was requested on the purpose of some questions in order to understand the value of exchanging the information. It was also noted that the inclusion of information on risk assessments was more easily carried out via a link to a website (which would be regularly maintained and updated), rather than by uploading files.
27. CCNASWP Members raised the issue of confidentiality, which at times limited the amount of information provided to a question e.g. providers of scientific and technical input to the consultative process, and also requested that effective measures be put in place to maintain the information in Part F on self-assessment of national capacities confidential. The need to collect and store in a separate platform the information in Part F was also raised.
28. CCNASWP Members confirmed their willingness to complete the information on the platform and suggested to track the use of the platform through IT tools to assess the usefulness and sustainability of the platform.

⁵ Available at the following address: <http://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/survey/> or in the dashboard in the login page: <http://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/login/>

29. The Representatives of FAO and WHO clarified that question 5 was included as a means to share examples of a country's approach and to understand the national consultative process. The Representatives also confirmed that the questions in Part F were related to the country self-assessment section on food safety of the IHR (2005) monitoring and evaluation framework and that FAO and WHO might use the information and share it in a similar manner to the approach taken for other IHR (2005) core capacities.
30. CCNASWP Members noted that suggestions on questions to be added to the platform could be sent directly to FAO and WHO.

Conclusion

31. The Coordinating Committee:
- Thanked FAO, WHO and the Codex Secretariat for their work in developing the on line platform to share information on countries' food safety control systems.
 - Agreed to continue work on the platform and asked FAO and WHO to take account of the suggestions made in the continued development.

USE OF CODEX STANDARDS IN THE REGION: RELEVANCE OF EXISTING REGIONAL STANDARDS AND NEED FOR NEW STANDARDS (Agenda Item 4)⁶

32. The Secretariat recalled that this item was on the agenda of the six FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees (RCCs) and that an electronic survey (using software SurveyMonkey), jointly developed with FAO and WHO, had been used to enhance data collection on the use of Codex standards from countries, which had allowed for easier data analysis and representation.
33. The Secretariat further explained that the survey had focused on specific standards, widely known and representative for their respective categories, i.e. (i) numerical standards (MRLs of pesticides in food and feed); (ii) general subject standards (*General Standards for Food Additives* (GSFA), *for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed* (GSCTFF) and *for Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods*; and (iii) *General Principles of Food Hygiene*.

Discussion

34. The Secretariat introduced the analysis of the survey results, as presented in CX/NASWP 16/14/5, and invited CCNASWP Members to note the outcome of the analysis and provide inputs on specific aspects of the survey.

Format and approach

35. With regard to the use of the software SurveyMonkey to collect the information, CCNASWP Members generally supported the tool. However, it was suggested that the survey should allow to be completed in phases. With regard to the survey questions, it was said that the format was acceptable, but that it did not allow an assessment of countries' constraints to provide the information.

Use of the results

36. CCNASWP Members were informed that the results of the survey provided useful information to FAO and WHO to understand the real use and uptake of Codex standards by countries and could also inform the capacity development efforts of FAO and WHO to assist countries in the use and compliance of Codex standards. Further, the results were useful to justify the budget allocation of both organisations to Codex (i.e. the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme).
37. CCNASWP Members said that the survey was useful to provide data and information to countries, which are weak in data collection systems, and suggested to aggregate the outcomes of the survey at global level and not only at the regional level so that the results could be used by other regions to inform the Commission and the wider membership about the status of the use of Codex standards in various parts of world.

Scope of next survey

38. CCNASWP Members noted that the survey could be repeated to allow countries, which had not replied to the survey, the possibility to provide their information and to those that have replied to update the information already provided. It was also suggested that the scope of the survey be expanded to a category of standards related to critical issues of interest to the region, e.g. standards developed by CCNFSDU.

⁶ [CX/NASWP 16/14/5](#)

Conclusion

39. The Coordinating Committee noted the results of the survey and suggested to expand the scope of the survey to a category of Codex standards of critical interest to the region, such as the standards developed by CCNSFDU.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES (Agenda Item 5)⁷

40. The Coordinating Committee considered the information provided in document CX/NASWP 16/14/6, noting that several matters were presented for information and others for discussion under relevant agenda items.

Management of the work of the Committee

41. CCNASWP Members observed that the CCFH approach to manage its work was not relevant to the work of CCNASWP and that, due to the limited work on standards development, it was not necessary for CCNASWP to develop a specific approach.

Conclusion

42. The Coordinating Committee considered that the priority setting criteria for the establishment of work priorities and the decision making criteria for the development of Codex standards and related texts as laid down in the Procedural Manual, were sufficient to prioritise its work.

CODEX WORK RELEVANT TO THE REGION (Agenda Item 6)⁸

43. The Chairperson recalled that the paper for this item had not been prepared and opened the floor for discussion on Codex work that could be relevant to the region.

Discussion

44. To start the discussion the Chairperson indicated CCFL work on date marking and encouraged CCNASWP members to follow the discussion to better understand how countries of the region could better benefit from that work.
45. CCNASWP Members recalled that New Zealand had proposed new work on date marking to CCFL (revision of the *General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Food*) on behalf of CCNASWP members and that CCFL had reached agreement on several definitions (i.e. date of manufacture, date of packaging, best before date / best quality before date and use by date / expiration date), while work was still in progress on the development of criteria for food that do not require date marking.
46. Other work of interest to the region included:
- Guidance on the use of systems equivalence/comparability (CCFICS)
 - Guidance for labelling of non-retail containers of food (CCFL)
 - Review of the *Standard for Follow-up Formula* ([CODEX STAN 156-1987](#)) (CCNFSDU)
 - Revision of the *Classification of Food and Feed* (CCPR)
 - IESTI equations (CCPR)
 - Revision of the *General Principles of Food Hygiene* and its HACCP Annex ([CX/RCP 1-1969](#)) (CCFH)
 - Revision of the *Code of Hygienic Practice for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* ([CX/RCP 53-2003](#)) (CCFH)
47. The Observer from IFPRI encouraged CCNASWP Members to contribute to the ongoing CCNFSDU work on the definition of "biofortification"⁹, which is urgently needed so that related biofortified food labelling issues and standards development could be further pursued.

Conclusion

48. The Coordinating Committee noted the work of interest indicated during the discussion and urged CCNASWP Members to follow the discussion and actively contribute to the work.

⁷ [CX/NASWP 16/14/6](#); CX/NASWP 16/14/6 Add.1

⁸ [CX/NASWP 16/14/7](#)

⁹ [REP16/NFSDU](#) paras 62-71

MONITORING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN (STRATEGIC PLAN FOR CCNASWP 2014 – 2019; STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION) (Agenda Item 7)¹⁰**Strategic Plan for CCNASWP 2014-2019 – Status of Implementation**

49. The Secretariat introduced the item and explained that CCNASWP was contributing to monitoring the implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan 2014-2019 (global Strategic Plan) through the implementation of the Strategic Plan for CCNASWP 2014-2019, which included linkages of its six Objectives to the activities of the global Strategic Plan.
50. The Chairperson noted that the paper for this item had not been prepared and drew the attention of CCNASWP Members to [CRD3](#), which provided comments from Papua New Guinea on monitoring and evaluating of objectives and activities of the Strategic Plan for CCNASWP 2014-2019.

Discussion

51. Samoa informed the Coordinating Committee that they were currently finalising the National Strategic Plan, which included a few priorities from the Strategic Plan for CCNASWP.
52. In response to the Chairperson's observation, CCNASWP Members noted that the issue of monitoring of the implementation of the regional Strategic Plan was of limited interest, particularly in light of the evolution and implementation of the global Strategic Plan. CCNASWP Members further commented that: there was no need for a regional Strategic Plan as CCNASWP work should contribute to the global Strategic Plan; and that PICs would need assistance to develop their capacities to contribute to and monitor the implementation of global Strategic Plan.
53. The Representative of FAO supported views that countries might gain greater benefit from having a national food safety and quality action work plan to guide Codex related work at country level, aligned to the global Strategic Plan. This would provide countries with a practical tool to progress Codex work.
54. The Representative of WHO mentioned that on request from the WHO Western Pacific Regional Committee, a 'Framework for Action on Food Safety in the Western Pacific Region' is being developed to replace the current Western Pacific Regional Food Safety Strategy 2011-2015. It is expected that the Framework will be presented to the 68th session of RCM for endorsement in 2017.

Conclusion

55. The Coordinating Committee:
- Agreed to discontinue the monitoring and reporting of Strategic Plan for CCNASWP 2014-2019 in recognising the need for CCNASWP to contribute to the global Strategic Plan.
 - Noted that WHO was developing the Framework for Action on Food Safety in the Western Pacific Region.

Preparation of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025¹¹

56. The Secretariat recalled that CCEXEC71: (i) had considered a document prepared by the Secretariat (CX/EXEC 16/71/ 6), which recommended a process and timeline for developing a new Strategic Plan for the period 2020-25; and (ii) had recommended to CAC39 to request the Secretariat to start the process of developing the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and that the current Strategic Plan 2014-2019 should be the starting point for the new plan. ¹²
57. The first step for the preparation of the new Strategic Plan was the provision of suggestions from FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees on possible goals and objectives for consideration by the CAC Chair and Vice-Chairs, which had been tasked to prepare a first draft Strategic Plan (without a detailed implementation plan) for circulation for comments and consideration by CCEXEC in 2017. RCCs would be requested to provide comments on the reviewed complete draft (including implementation plan) during the 2018-2019 round of meetings.

Discussion

58. CCNASWP Members considered that the four Goals of the Codex Strategic Plan 2014-2019 were still valid and relevant for the new Strategic Plan.
59. With regard to the Objectives, CCNASWP Members said that they were not in a position to provide comments and suggestions at this session.

¹⁰ CX/NASWP 16/14/8 (not issued); FAO and WHO capacity building activities in the Pacific ([CRD1](#))

¹¹ CX/NASWP 16/14/9 (not issued); Comments of Papua New Guinea on Item 7 ([CRD3](#))

¹² [REP16/EXEC](#), para. 71

Conclusion

60. The Coordinating Committee:

- Agreed that the four Goals of the Strategic Plan 2014-2019 were still valid and relevant for the new Strategic Plan but that it was premature to discuss the Objectives.
- Noted that Codex Members would have the opportunity to provide comments on the first draft Strategic Plan before its consideration by CCEXEC73.

PROPOSED DRAFT REGIONAL STANDARD FOR FERMENTED NONI JUICE (Agenda Item 8)¹³

61. Tonga introduced CX/NASWP 16/14/9 and recalled that CAC36 (2013) had approved new work on the development of a regional standard for fermented noni juice and that CCNASWP12/13 had established EWGs to develop and revise the proposed draft standard. Tonga summarised the main aspects of the proposed draft standard and the comments submitted at the present session.

62. The Secretariat recalled the request of CCCF9/10 on the status of the standard and data availability for the JECFA full risk assessment of scopoletin.

Discussion

63. A number of CCNASWP Members noted that although progress had been made, additional work was still necessary to address the written comments submitted at the present session.

64. These Members made the following comments:

- Following the request of CCNASWP13 on a safe level for scopoletin, CCCF9 had included the substance in the JECFA priority list for full risk assessment with a view to advise CCNASWP in their development of a standard for fermented noni juice, therefore countries had to submit information and data on toxicity and safety of scopoletin to allow JECFA to evaluate the substance, otherwise it would remain in the priority list.
- In view of the outstanding issues surrounding the scope, fermentation, methods of analysis, contaminants, especially the safe intake level of scopoletin, the proposed draft standard could not be advanced in the Step procedure at the present session, but if progress were made and consensus reached the standard could be advanced to Step 5/8 at the next session.
- The close examination of Codex standards covering fermented products, e.g. *Regional Standard for Fermented Soybean Paste* ([CODEX STAN 298R-2009](#)); *Standard for Kimchi* ([CODEX STAN 223-2001](#)), *Standard for Fermented Milks* ([CODEX STAN 243-2003](#)), *Standard for Pickled Fruits and Vegetables* ([CODEX STAN 260-2007](#)) could provide useful information on the further development of the standard.

65. Other CCNASWP Members noted that the development of a standard had been on the CCNASWP agenda for many years and that the standard was needed as many countries in the Pacific region were already exporting noni to other countries.

66. With regard to the CCCF request, the Representative of FAO clarified that the data required by JECFA to undertake a safety assessment of scopoletin included all available data on: (i) toxicity of scopoletin; occurrence of scopoletin in noni juice and any other commodities where scopoletin can occur; and (iii) consumption data of fermented noni juice and other products which potentially contain scopoletin.

67. The Secretariat also encouraged CCNASWP Members to provide data for JECFA safety assessment of scopoletin and further encouraged Members to provide CCCF with information, and solid justification to ensure that the substance is given high priority for JECFA evaluation. The Secretariat also advised interested Members, in particular those producing and exporting fermented noni juice, to actively participate in the EWG in order to comprehensively and timely address all comments.

Conclusion

68. The Coordinating Committee:

- Noting that several issues needed further discussion, agreed that the proposed draft standard was not ready to progress in the Step procedure.

¹³ [CX/NASWP 16/14/9](#); Comments at Step 3 of Australia, New Zealand, United States of America ([CX/NASWP 16/14/9 Add.1](#)); Tonga, Brazil ([CX/NASWP 16/14/9 Add.2](#)); Tonga ([CRD2](#))

- Agreed to reconvene the EWG, led by Tonga, to redraft the proposed draft standard taking into account the above discussion and all written comments submitted at the current session and urged CCNASWP Members to actively participate in the EWG.
- Noting that the timeframe for completion of work on a regional standard for fermented noni juice was 2017, agreed to request CCEXEC to postpone completion of this work to 2020.
- Agreed to inform CCCF on the status of development of the standard and urged CCNASWP Members to provide to JECFA the data of safety/toxicity of scopoletin (toxicity, occurrence and data consumption).

Status of the Proposed Draft Regional Standard for Fermented Noni Juice (N01-2013)

69. The Coordinating Committee agreed to return the proposed draft standard to Step 2/3 for redrafting by the abovementioned EWG, circulation for comments and consideration by the next session of CCNASWP.

DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A REGIONAL STANDARD FOR KAVA PRODUCT THAT CAN BE USED AS A BEVERAGE WHEN MIXED WITH WATER (Agenda Item 9)¹⁴

70. Vanuatu recalled that the development of a regional standard for kava had been on the CCNASWP agenda for many years and highlighted the key issues addressed in the discussion paper [CX/NASWP 16/14/10](#) noting that the attached project document needed further scrutiny.

Discussion

71. CCNASWP Members, in particular those producing and exporting kava, highlighted the critical importance of kava in the Pacific region as it is a major commodity not only for export, but also for the domestic market, is an important source of income for many families and has also a high cultural value for Pacific island countries. These countries expressed their support for the proposed regional standard for kava. It was also noted that some countries in the Pacific region that import kava wanted a standard developed to protect their consumers.
72. Other CCNASWP Members recalled that CCNASWP had struggled for many years to understand the nature of the product to be standardized and whether the proposed work was falling within the mandate of Codex. In this regard, they noted that the side event on kava, held on 19 September, had contributed to clarify the nature and the scope of the proposal. They highlighted that New Zealand and Australia have a significant population from Pacific island countries, which consumed kava, and that a joint Australian / New Zealand food code standard for kava had been developed, which make explicit reference to cold water extraction. These Members expressed support for the development of a regional standard for kava as a beverage when mixed with water and which explicitly excludes the use of kava as an ingredient in food.
73. CCNASWP Members noted that the project document (Appendix I to [CX/NASWP 16/14/10](#)) needed further refinement and made the following comments:
- The scope of the work should make clear reference to cold water extraction of fresh and dried products.
 - The sentence on the negative publicity to kava products in Section 3 "Its relevance and timeliness" should be deleted.
 - Some trade data needed to be revised (e.g. data on trade with countries outside the region should be removed) and updated (as some data appeared quite old).
 - Timeline for completion of the new work can include: start date: 2017; adoption at Step 5: 2019; adoption at Step 8: 2021.

Conclusion

74. The Coordinating Committee unanimously recognized the importance of starting new work on kava and that the scope of the regional standard should be limited to kava as a beverage when mixed with cold water.
75. The Committee acknowledged that the project document needed some revision, in particular the scope, the trade data and the timeframe.
76. The Coordinating Committee agreed to:
- Start new work on the development of a regional standard for kava as a beverage when mixed with cold water.

¹⁴ [CX/NASWP 16/14/10](#); Comments of Papua New Guinea ([CRD7](#))

- Request Vanuatu, with the assistance of Australia and New Zealand, to revise the project document for new work on the basis of the above discussion for submission to CCEXEC73 through the Codex Secretariat. The scope of the standard would explicitly exclude the use of kava as an ingredient in food.
- Establish an EWG, chaired by Vanuatu and open to all Members of the Region and Observers, that subject to approval of the new work by CAC40, would prepare a proposed draft regional Standard for kava as a beverage when mixed with cold water, for circulation at Step 3 and consideration at CCNASWP15.

NOMINATION OF THE COORDINATOR (Agenda Item 10)¹⁵

77. On the proposal of the Delegation of New Zealand, the Coordinating Committee unanimously agreed to recommend to CAC40 that Vanuatu be reappointed for a second term as Coordinator for North America and the South West Pacific. The Delegation of Vanuatu thanked all CCNASWP Members for their support and accepted the nomination.

OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 11)¹⁶

78. The Coordinating Committee noted CX/NASWP 16/14/12, prepared by WHO, and that no other business had been put forward during the adoption of the Agenda.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION (Agenda Item 12)

79. The Coordinating Committee was informed that its 15th Session would be held in approximately two years' time and that more detailed arrangements would be communicated to Members following the appointment of the Coordinator by CAC40.

¹⁵ [CX/NASWP 16/14/11](#)

¹⁶ [CX/NASWP 16/14/12](#) (Relations between FAO and WHO policies, strategies and guidelines and Codex work (matter for information from CCEXEC71 and CAC39), prepared by WHO)

Appendix I

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Appendix II**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY HONOURABLE ASSIK TOMMY TOMSCOLL,
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA****Why CODEX Alimentarius is important to North America and South Western Pacific Region**

Excellences,

The world we live in now is a single multicultural global village established through connectivity by high speed transports, advanced communication and cutting-edge information technology systems. North America and South Western Pacific region are not surprisingly weakened by trending global development issues that encompass social, economic, geopolitical and environmental problems, concerns, disputes and productions that appear local to individual countries. These issues appear local at face value but have origins in other countries - that is how small the world is today and yet much diversified.

Diversity in culture, language, public policy, natural resource availability, education, health, biodiversity and wealth levels are obstructing unbiased development, accelerating poverty and hunger, and putting barriers to equitable spread of incomes. Indeed, it makes it demanding for countries to attain Sustainable Development Goals.

The insightful global knowledge, experience, expertise and networking of CODEX Alimentarius Commission (or CAC) as a global authority and reference on setting food standards makes CAC the preferred development partner of choice in a world that is characterised by volatility, insecurity, uncertainty, and in many instances driven by crises management.

What is required to create a successful partnership is to bring a global actor to the region to help build strong indigenous capacity and that is almost always a requirement for successful nation building. Fortunately CAC has this competitive edge and offers this advantage to North America and South Western Pacific states through partnership.

CAC and the people of North America and South Western Pacific are three (3) modules of the same project – building sustainability, healthy, educated, and prosperous people in these regions.

The aspirations of these people regardless of whether they live in North America or South West Pacific are the same inherent as ancient: free from domination and cruelty of all forms, guarding their integrity, identity and self-respect.

- They aim to achieve high Internal Human Development where every person is dynamically involved in the process of freeing himself or herself from every form of oppression, so that each men or women will have the opportunity to develop as a whole person in relationship with others.
- All people to have an equal opportunity to participate in, and benefit from, the development of their country, and
- They want to be politically and economically independent to ensure that their freedom to make decision and choices is not restricted by obligations or relationship with others.

The issues, problems, opportunities and challenges these people face may be deemed local, but certainly inter-linked internationally, because many of these issues emanate from policy decisions of foreign governments. In order for each country to resolve these issues and problems, and take advantage of opportunities, they must collaborate with global actors like CAC to develop integrated solutions specific to each local country.

Climate change, environment change, and population increase, impact public policy, food security, food risk, and food trade. Decline in arable land and land capacity, increase Invasive Alien Species, loss of Tropical Montane Cloud Forest, decline in ecosystem functions, rising water and atmospheric temperature, fresh water decline, coastal ocean bleaching, decline in agro-biodiversity, sea-level rising, potential collapse of inshore marine ecosystems through overfishing, and population displacement will leave behind historic impacts on human habitation and in small island states may in future end human habitation.

The social, geopolitical and economic consequences are already felt by people of the small island states and small economy states in North America and South West Pacific. These states are no longer dependent, they are to a smaller degree interdependent, but largely are now dependent on countries with large economies, and with economic scales of production, specialised skill capacity and innovative technology for sustainability, and they require foreign aid money to fund their activities. Small economies are continually the subject of unfair and deceptive food trade practises whereby big economies impose excessive food standard

measures that deny small countries market access. On the blind side, the big economies demand market access for their produces to sell in small economy states.

The result is that small economy states remain food dependent on imports, their trade deficit gaps increase yearly tipping towards large economies, and they continue operating budget from grants and borrowings, including future front end loading.

Many of the poor population also live in the regions of North America and South West Pacific. They spend 60 to 70 percent of their income buying imported food and therefore have little to no savings to escape poverty.

Food security, food safety and food trade agendas strike at the heart of development and economic growth. They affect the ability of countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

The development issues countries face today are both multi-dimensional and cross-cutting in nature. As a result of this situational arrangement, countries in North America and South Pacific need CAC as a forum to voice their concerns and CAC as their mouth piece and proxy to represent them at conferences where these small economies cannot afford to be present. Small economies greatly benefit from the coordinated actions, investments and profession competencies of CAC.

Food security (or food insecurity) is driving global growth because food is the most traded commodity daily in the world and creates many service industries that support food trade from primary production to consumption at the breakfast, lunch and dining tables every day in every country. Managing and coordinating actions, establishing rules and regulations for food standards, food safety and fair food trade across national boundaries is a required task no single country can do but only CAC.

The source of strength of CAC is inherited from the combined heritage of all member countries.

The resilient success of CAC is also due to the leadership of the past and in the present of Madam Awilo Pernet, Chairperson of CAC supported by the strong leadership of His Excellency Graziano da Silva, Director General of FAO and Madam Margaret Chan, Director General of WHO.

Success is also due to the commitment, collaboration and unity of all member countries.

Since 1963, and 53 years onward, CAC undeniably remains committed to its dual mandate: protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in the food trade.

For many small countries and small economies CAC is a blink of light at the end of the tunnel offering hope for humanity. It has been with us for 53 years that we now do not thing but presume that when we wake up tomorrow, CAC will be there for us, just as the sun sets today after night-fall, we will wake up to a new sun rise tomorrow and a new beginning – taking it all for grant.

Congratulation CAC for your deserving achievements and we look to be part of your future journey and victory.

Thank you, God bless you all and enrich this discussion.