

# Establishment of the Global Initiative for Food-related Scientific Advice (GIFSA)

## What and Why?

For over 50 years WHO and FAO have been the international source of scientific advice on matters related to the safety of food. This advice provides the evidence base for a linkage between substances in food and disease, or the prevention of disease. This evidence base is necessary to define the best preventive measures to avoid foodborne disease and promote human health as it links to our daily food.

It also enables both national and international solutions to these problems, a necessary pre-condition in the present period of increased international food trade. Therefore it is important that the FAO/WHO scientific advice provides the basis for food standards, guidelines and codes of practice developed by the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission.

## New Developments

WHO and FAO devote significant resources to the provision of scientific advice in relation to food. However, there has been an increase in the demand for scientific advice. More and more links between food and disease have been discovered and recently also beneficial food constituents are now investigated and linked to the prevention of

disease. The FAO/WHO framework for scientific advice is based on a transparent and global selection of experts representing the best in food safety and nutrition science. Over recent years the scope of scientific advice has therefore been broadened to include zoonotic diseases, biotechnology and nutrition as well as new emerging priority issues.

## Moving forward

As a result, FAO and WHO need to overcome a number of challenges in order to continue to support the technical consultations, workshops and related activities, which form the basis of FAO/WHO scientific advice. Over the past few years FAO and WHO have revised their advice framework

to ensure the independence, quality, timeliness and sustainability of the provision of scientific advice. In order to specifically address the issue of sustainability of the provision of scientific advice, FAO and WHO are establishing a Global Initiative for Food-related Scientific Advice (GIFSA).

## GIFSA

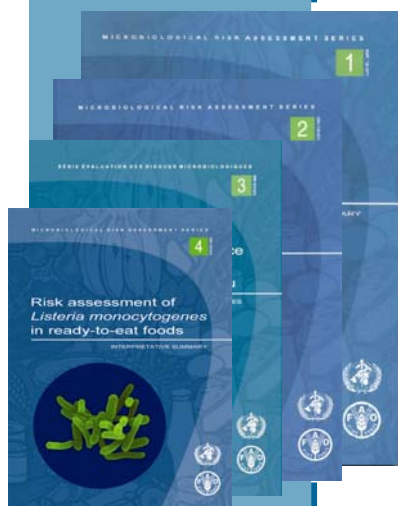
The specific objectives of the GIFSA are:

- To **increase awareness** of the FAO/WHO programme of work on the provision of scientific advice,
- To **mobilize technical, financial and human resources** to support the provision of scientific advice in food safety and nutrition,
- To **promote the timeliness** of the provision of scientific advice by WHO and FAO, while ensuring the continuation of the **highest level of integrity and quality**.

## Characteristics of the Fund

The main focus of GIFSA is to establish a mechanism to facilitate the provision of extrabudgetary resources for scientific advice activities. Contributions are accepted from governments, organizations and foundations in accordance with WHO and FAO rules. Two separate accounts will be maintained, one at WHO and one at FAO. An FAO/WHO Committee manages the GIFSA, and

procedures have been developed to ensure that all resources provided through GIFSA will be allocated to activities in an independent and transparent manner, taking into consideration the criteria for prioritization of activities already agreed by Codex, FAO and WHO and the specific needs of FAO and WHO Member countries.



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