Science *for* Safe Food

FAO's strategy for the provision of scientific advice for food safety

2010–2013

Requests support through the dynamic fund: GIFSA – The Global Initiative for Food-related Scientific Advice

Enhancing the work of FAO
to improve the quality and safety of foods
at all stages of the food chain

FAO's strategy for the provision of scientific advice for food safety 2010-2013

Food and Agriculture
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Foreword

Overall goal of FAO's 'Science for Safe Food' Strategy:
'To serve, in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), as the leading global reference for scientifically based food standards and guidance on science-based approaches to improve global food safety and afford adequate levels of consumer protection, and facilitate trade'.

I am pleased to introduce **FAO's Four-year Strategy for the Provision of Scientific Advice for Food Safety (2010–2013)**, which is launched within the wider context of FAO's Reform, and seeks extrabudgetary support through a newly established multidonor Trust Fund, the **Global Initiative for Food-related Scientific Advice** (GIFSA).

From farm to table, scientific advice provides the basis of both national and global food standards and control systems to ensure consumer protection and production of safe food. Moreover, food safety measures improve the sustainability of food supply chains, facilitate trade, and work to ensure food security – both locally and globally.

In recent years, there has been a marked increase in demand for scientific advice to support food control systems, due to growing complexities in worldwide food production systems and changing consumption patterns, plus the potential for new hazards associated with changes in food production and consumption patterns, as well as WTO's recognition of Codex standards as the international benchmark for food safety requirements. Consequently, FAO's capacity to respond to the growing demand has been stretched.

The 'Science for Safe Food' Strategy presents a renewed focus for FAO's provision of scientific advice and is integral to the Organizational Strategic Objective D: *Improved quality and safety of foods at all stages of the food chain'*, and is coupled with FAO's Medium-Term Plan (2010–2013). Scientific advice for food safety is therefore seen as a vital pillar to achieving FAO's wider mandate for '*A world free of hunger and*

Foreword

malnutrition where food and agriculture contributes to improving the living standards of all, especially the poorest, in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner'.

In particular, GIFSA funds will enable expanded and more timely provision of advice on important emerging issues (including emergency threats) and also provide increased targeted support to enhance scientific capacities at a national and regional level. This strategy supports FAO's resource mobilization efforts for the Organization's work on Global standard setting and implementation into national policies and legislation (IFA-SNL).

FAO works in close partnership with WHO, the strength of which rests in their complementary mandates in the field of food safety and nutrition. For over 50 years, FAO and WHO have been the international source of scientific advice for matters related to food safety.

The Strategy organizes key activities under the following core objectives, which are to '*Expand the Provision of Scientific Advice, More Effectively Disseminate Scientific Information, Strengthen National and Regional Scientific Capacity, Build Scientific Communities and Networks, and Ensure Sustainability and Success*'.

FAO is aware that an ambitious plan requires a partnership approach, and we therefore welcome member countries, the scientific community, NGOs, potential donors, and other relevant organisations to actively dialogue and engage with us on how to best implement the strategy on science for safe food in the global context.

I thank you for your interest in this important work, and look forward to hearing from you,

Ezzeddine Boutrif
Director, Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division

1. Introduction

Consumer protection, enhanced production and trade

Governments are charged with the task of developing food and nutrition policies and related legal and institutional frameworks to ensure the foods we eat are safe, nutritious and of adequate quality. This includes the development of food standards, controls and requirements which need to be science-based. FAO/WHO scientific advice makes an important contribution to inform and strengthen decision making processes focussed on food safety and nutrition.

One of the primary clients is the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), where the science is used extensively in the development of Codex standards, recommendations and guidelines, while other important users include national governments, the food industry, and science and academia, involved in developing and implementing effective control measures at national and regional level. This advice is particularly important in cases where expertise or resources to conduct research necessary for the formulation of national food standards or control programmes are lacking.

The 'Science for Safe Food' Strategy is part of FAO's Strategic Objective D: *Improved quality and safety of foods at all stages of the food chain*[1], where scientific advice is essential in setting both national and global food standards and building food safety systems to ensure safe food and afford adequate levels of consumer protection. As a result, the food production chain within countries is sustained and trade – both locally and globally – is enhanced. Moreover, food-related scientific advice contributes toward important Millennium Development Goals, where food safety not only enhances the health and wellness of populations, but also acts as a vital element to ensuring food security, poverty alleviation and economic growth through improved food production and trade.

[1] FAO Conference. Thirty-sixth Session, Rome, 18–23 November 2009, Report of the CoC-IEE to the FAO conference on the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO renewal.

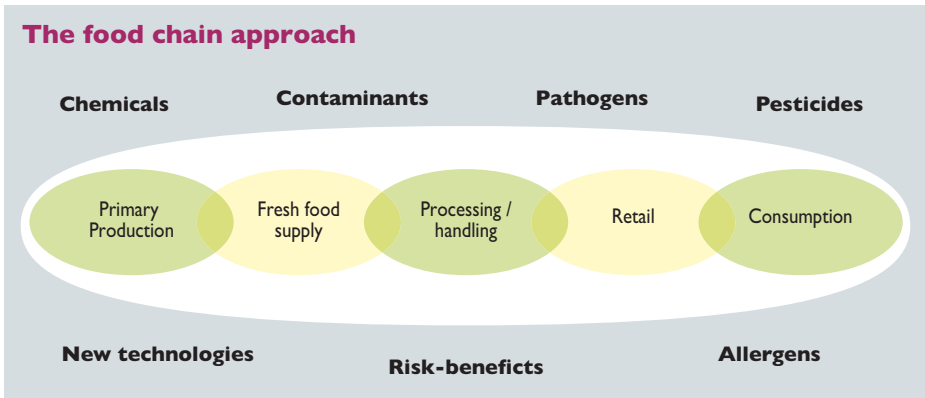
2.
Who we are:
'Science for Safe Food'

■ Scientific advice from farm to table

History and comparative advantage

For over fifty years, FAO has worked in strong partnership with WHO, where complementary remits strengthen the provision of scientific advice for food safety. Together, the focus is on the entire food production chain, from farm to table, where food safety and quality, as well as nutritional aspects, are taken into consideration. Expert committees provide global scientific advice (including risk assessments), which serve both the CAC to set global food standards, and FAO and WHO member countries to enhance national food control systems. In addition, FAO works to enhance scientific capacities within developing and transition countries, to strengthen the use of

■ Over 50 years of experience



science in decision making and in the development of effective control measures at national and regional level.

The FAO 'Science for Safe Food' Strategy brings together the work of various groups contributing to FAO's Strategic Objective D – under the leadership of the Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division (AGN) – and in collaboration with the Plant Production and Protection Division (AGP). Both Divisions are central players in the provision of scientific advice through joint FAO/WHO expert meetings[2]. FAO and WHO are recognized as the international source of scientific advice on matters related to food, serving the Codex Alimentarius Commission and FAO and WHO member countries.

Furthermore, an important aspect of this Strategy is enhancing scientific capacities in developing and transition countries, to strengthen the scientific basis for food control measures and food standards at a more local level. AGN has a long history in providing technical assistance and supporting countries to:

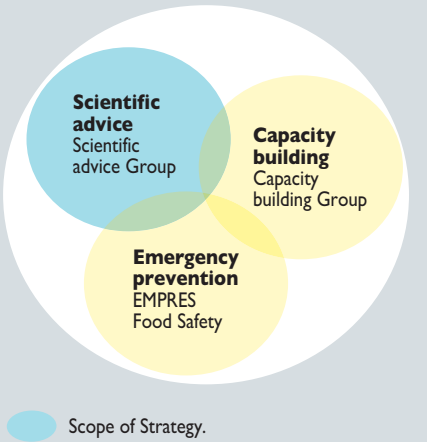
- build food safety systems at national and regional levels,
- apply international risk assessments and global scientific advice as a basis for strengthened national food control systems,
- generate data to build evidence-based approaches to food safety and control systems.

Combined, in the longer term, these activities contribute to the increased availability of data and experts for the development of scientific advice at a global level.

In addition, the Strategy both benefits from and complements the work of the FAO Programme EMPRES[3] Food Safety, in ensuring that scientific advice will be provided when required where triggered by emergency situations. EMPRES Food Safety is a relatively new programme that serves as one important component of the FAO Food Chain Crisis Management Framework (FCC) and serves to coordinate member countries institutions responsible for food – and agriculture – related crisis situations.

The multidisciplinary approach and complementary duties amongst the several groups is shown.

Related FAO groups working on the 'Science for Safe Food' Strategy



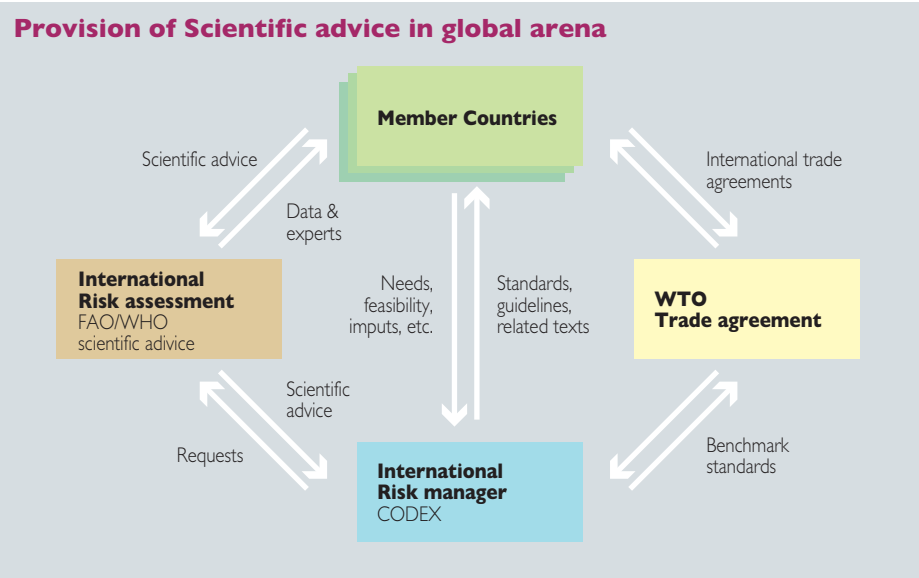
Enhancing developing and transition country scientific capacities

[2] Expert meetings include: **JECFA** – Joint FAO/WHO Committee on Food Additives (charged also with risk assessment of chemical contaminants, natural toxins and residues of veterinary drugs in food); **JEMRA** – Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on Microbiological Risk Assessment; **JMPR** – Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues; **JMPS** – Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Specifications, and *ad hoc* meetings on food safety and nutrtion issues.

[3] EMPRES stands for Emergency Prevention System.

2. Who we are: 'Science for Safe Food'

■ WTO recognition



Risk Assessment in a Global Context

Scientific advice provides the essential basis – the Lifeblood – for international food standards, guidelines and codes of practice developed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. Furthermore, the scientific advice provided by FAO and WHO is also used extensively by national risk managers responsible for food safety and food control activities in member countries. The pre-eminence of this advice is implicitly acknowledged by the World Trade Organization (WTO) in its recognition of Codex as the international benchmark for food safety requirements within the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the SPS Agreement).

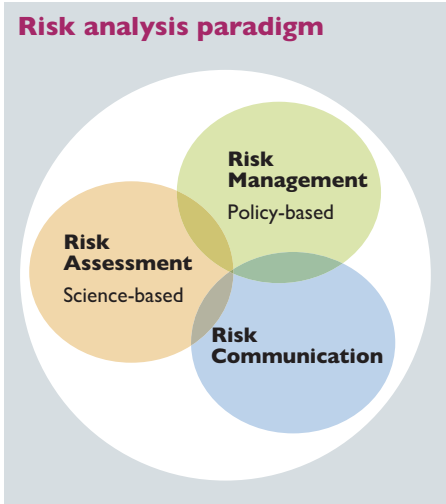
A frequent request from member countries[4] is to enhance capacities at a national level to bridge the gap that exists between globally generated scientific advice and application within national food control systems. A key element to this Strategy, therefore, includes the identification and enhanced participation of experts in delivering the scientific advice, and expanded data collection on co-identified priority topics for a given region or country - to both contribute to global standard setting, as well as to equip countries to more effectively use and interpret data, with the aim of enhancing the scientific basis of food control systems.

[4] Enhancing developing country participation in FAO/WHO scientific advice activities: Report of a joint FAO/WHO meeting – FAO Food and Nutrition Paper 88 (2006).

The 'Life Blood' of Codex and national food control systems

At the international level, FAO/WHO scientific advice provides the baseline information required within the risk analysis paradigm that combines scientific risk assessment with risk management and communication:

- **Risk Assessment** – FAO and WHO convene international expert meetings to assess scientific data and compile scientific information and then offers the conclusions to the member countries and Codex.
- **Risk Management** – member countries and Codex use the scientific advice as the basis for developing food standards, guidelines and codes of practice. Factored in are also issues related to health and fair trade practices that, in the end, ensure food safety but also 'manage the risk' by ensuring the standards are workable for all countries and sectors.
- **Risk Communication** – from the time the issue of risk is raised through the risk assessment and risk management process, exchange of information ensures all stakeholders are able to make informed decisions.



Key Beneficiaries

Scientific advice provided by FAO and WHO supports a broad range of actors in the food safety community: member countries, Codex Alimentarius Commission, food producers, food processors, industry, consumers, researchers, academia and NGOs.

Collectively, these actors look to FAO and WHO to act as a neutral and independent provider of scientific advice regarding food safety standards and hence improve the food safety and global harmonization of food standards, and facilitate international trade.

3. A renewed focus: the rationale

■ Timely availability of scientific advice

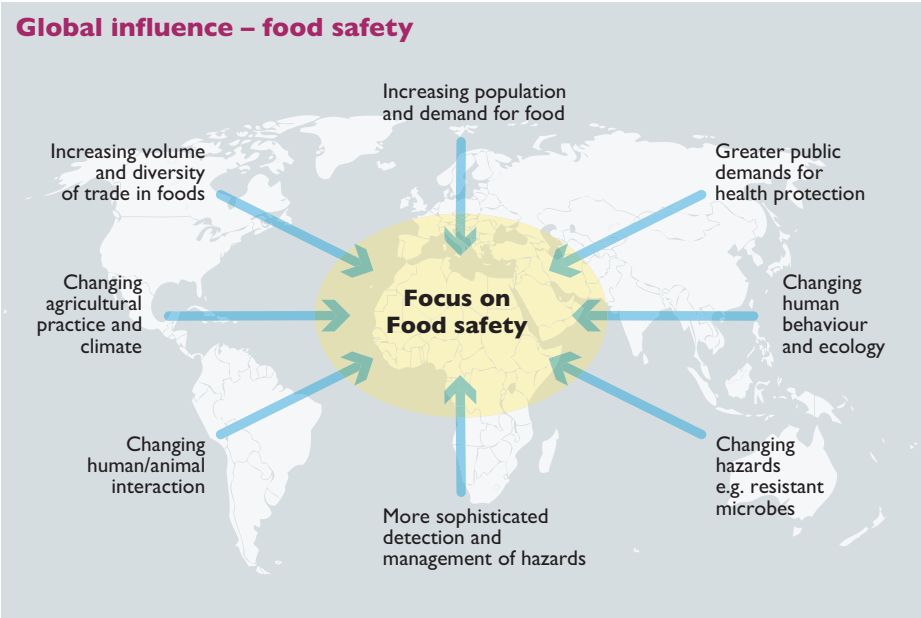
Changing Global Context

The complexities of worldwide food production systems plus the potential presence of new hazards associated with changes in production systems and consumption patterns have increased the need for science-based advice to support global food control systems. FAO aims to support the food safety community in keeping pace with:

- globalization of food production systems;
- expansion of food trade;
- greater consumer exposure to different types of food;
- innovations in the food industry;
- new food technologies;
- greater demands for health protection.

Changing Nature of Scientific Requests

The demand and importance of FAO/WHO scientific advice for food safety has increased in recent years. This has been partly due to the WTO's recognition of Codex standards as the benchmark standards for food safety in international food trade, coupled with increasing accountability demanded of governments and food producers to demonstrate the scientific basis of food safety measures. This global trend exerts pressure on FAO to ensure adequate resources and respond in a timely manner.



■ Targeting specific country needs

Pressures include:

- **increase in number** of requests;
- **greater variation** in the type of requests, including emerging issues;
- **tighter timeframe** to respond to Codex and member country requests;
- **emergencies** caused by unexpected or large-scale food safety incidents.

Differing National and Regional Contexts

Ensuring food safety requires that measures be based on science. The risk analysis paradigm, therefore, is an essential approach that enables countries to analyse, in a structured way. This approach helps to analyse which foods are of greatest concern, what risks they may pose to their populations, and identify the most appropriate control measures.

Developing and transition countries frequently request support to better develop food control systems, and in particular see the need to strengthen the scientific component (generate data to build evidence-based approaches, etc.). Failing to address this need, a country's ability to assure consumer protection,

sustain food production, overcome food security challenges, and optimize market access, may be compromised.

Given Mandate from Codex and Member Countries

A key goal of the Codex Strategic Plan (2008–2013) is to promote wide and consistent application of scientific principles and risk analysis. It states "the Commission requests FAO and WHO to continue to promote the understanding of risk analysis and to continue to explore new areas of work, such as nutritional risk assessment, so as to provide the scientific advice relevant to Codex activities for standard setting". It adds "the timely availability of scientific advice is a prerequisite for the Codex to fulfil its mandate". Support for strengthening the FAO/WHO scientific advice program is strongly voiced by Codex members[5], as they recognize the challenges facing FAO and WHO, in continuing to meet global demands and expectations in this field.

In order to re-examine the provision of scientific advice, FAO, in collaboration with WHO, undertook an evaluation (Consultative Process 2003– 07) in consultation with the relevant stakeholders. Through this process, and further built upon by this Strategy, stakeholder recommendations included:

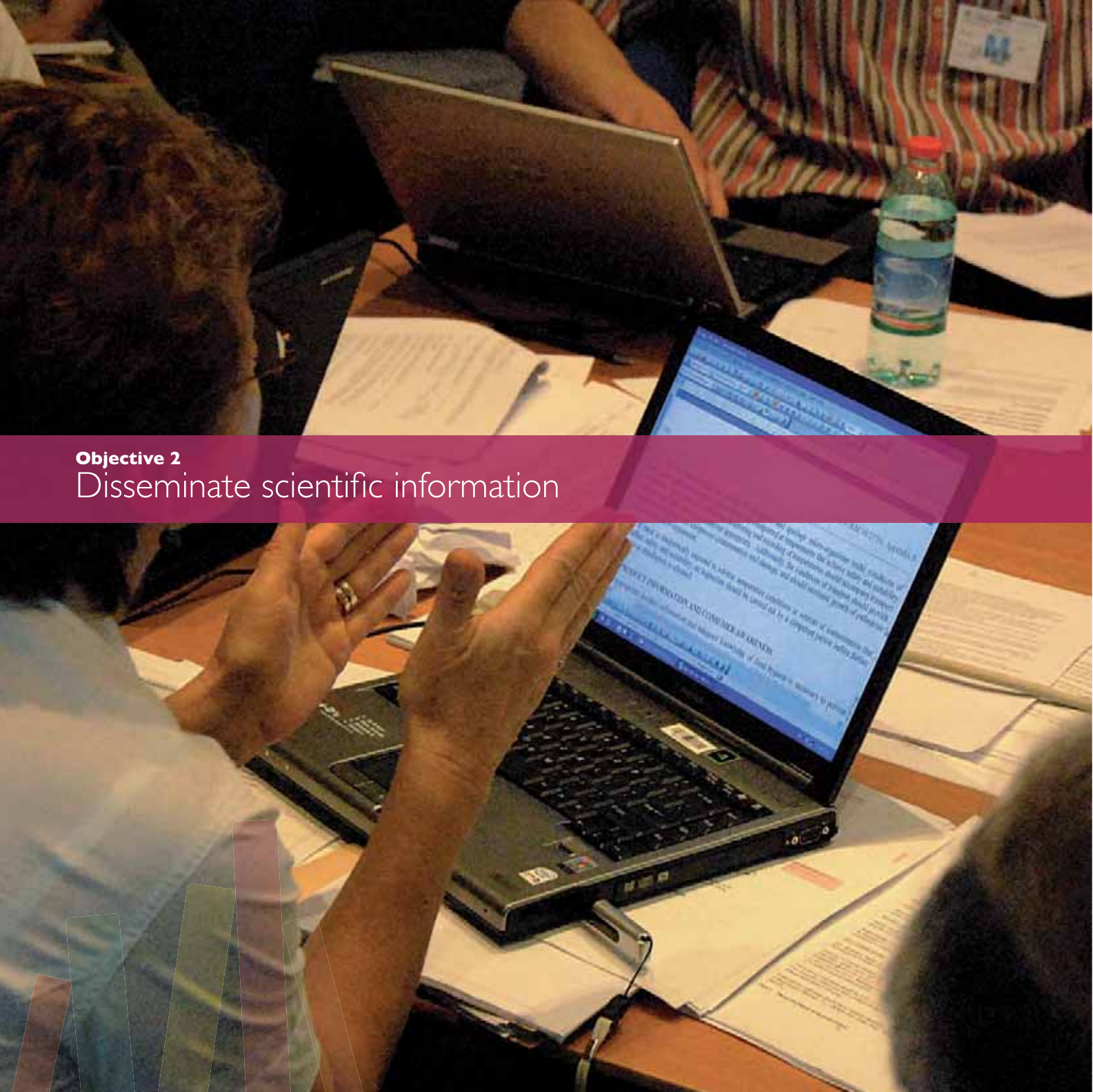
- strengthen the procedures and principles underlying the development of scientific advice[6];
- strengthen FAO and WHO capacities to meet the demands for timely and quality advice, and continue to address the gap that still exists (especially in developing and emerging countries) to use and interpret scientific data and strengthen their basis for food standards;
- launch the Global Initiative for Food-related Scientific Advice (GIFSA) to act as an extrabudgetary mechanism to attract additional funds for food-related scientific advice.

5 30th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Rome, 2–7 July 2007 and the 59th Session of the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Rome, 26–29 June 2007

6 As a result: the document *FAO/WHO joint framework for the provision of scientific advice on food safety and nutrition* was produced.

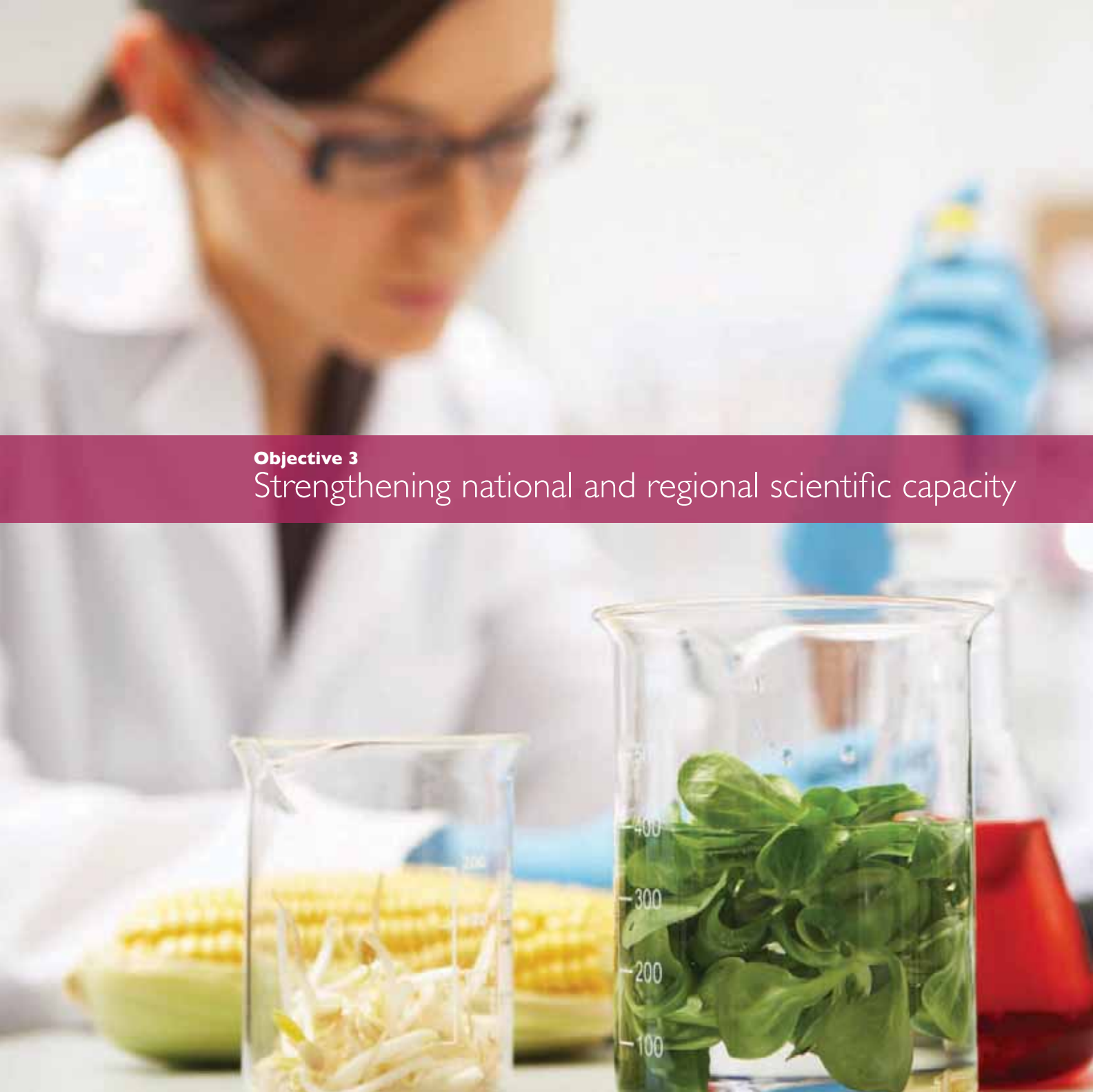
Objective 1

Provide expert scientific advice for safe, nutritious food



Objective 2

Disseminate scientific information



Objective 3

Strengthening national and regional scientific capacity

Objective 4

Building scientific communities and networks

4. Our aims: 'Science for Safe Food' strategy, 2010–2013

Leading global reference for scientific advice

Goal

To serve, in partnership with WHO, as **the leading global reference** for scientifically based food standards and guidance on science-based approaches to improve global food safety and afford adequate levels of consumer protection, and facilitate trade.

Core Principles

FAO's Provision of Scientific Advice is based on the following core principles:

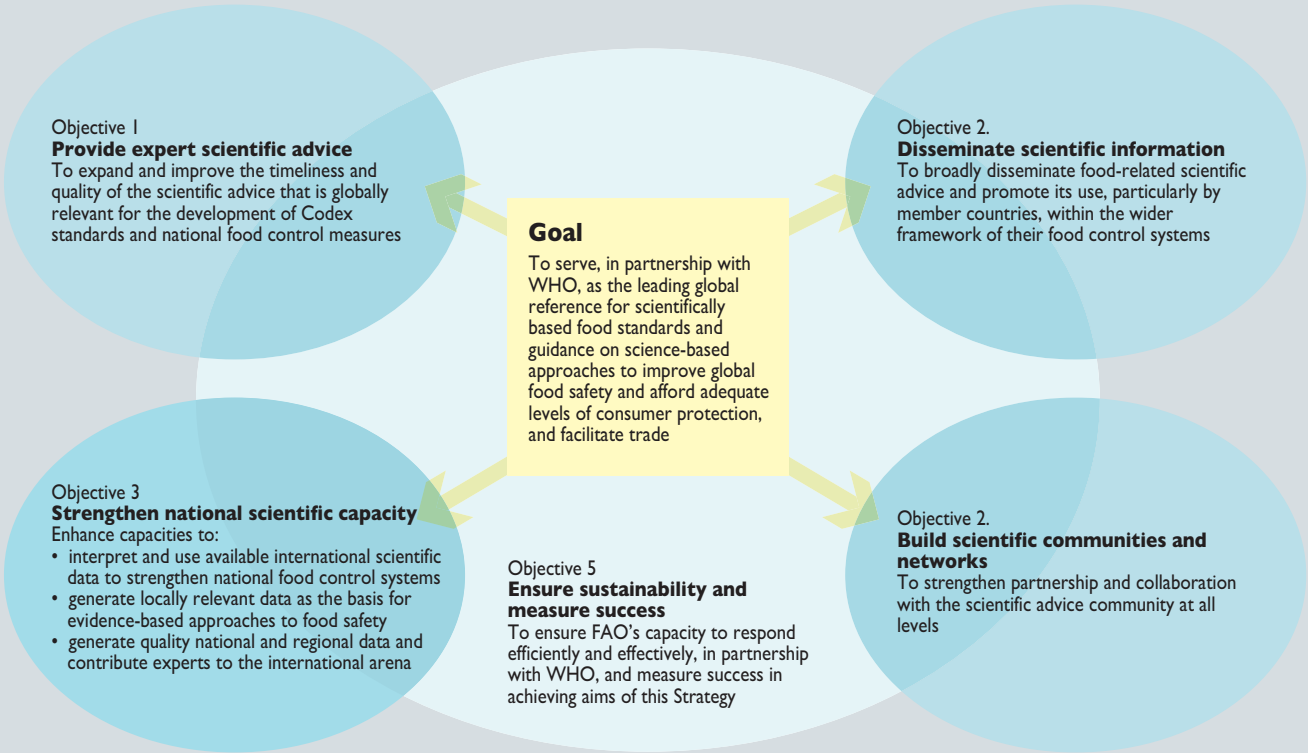
- **soundness** – scientific excellence;
- **responsibility** – efficiency and accountability;
- **objectivity** – neutrality and independence of the advice;
- **fairness** – ethical conduct;
- **transparency** – broad access to information – comprehensive, understandable and timely;
- **inclusiveness** – a multidisciplinary and global approach.

Core Objectives

Five Core Objectives set the broad picture for FAO's 'Science for Safe Food' Strategy and form the key areas of service for the work in the coming years.

4. Our aims: 'Science for Safe Food' strategy, 2010–2013

Overview of the 'Science for safe Food' strategy



Priorities

In the timeframe of this Strategy, certain food-related issues including new emerging topics, for scientific advice have been prioritized, based on member countries and Codex requests, as well as regions and countries of focus for enhancing scientific capacities.

Food-related Issues

- **Pathogens** – Viruses, Mycobacterium, *Salmonella, Campylobacter* and pathogenic *E. Coli*;

- **Chemicals, Contaminants and Residues** – Mycotoxins, metals, Bisphenol A, pesticide and veterinary drug residues;
- **Animal Production** – Antimicrobial resistance, feed safety and recombinant vaccines in food producing animals;
- **New Technologies of Production Systems** – Nanotechnologies;
- **Nutrition** – Fat and fatty acids, protein quality, nutrient composition, milk and milk products, and vitamin A;
- **Allergens** – peanuts and soya;
- **Other** – risk-benefit assessment and emerging issues related to climate change.

Enhancing scientific capacities at a regional and national level

The Strategy prioritizes capacity building support to developing and transition countries. Specific examples may include:

- **FAO/WHO Regional Food Safety Conferences** follow-up
  - **Africa**, **Asia**, **Europe** and **Latin America and the Caribbean** – Support Regional Plans of Action and strategies for food safety, particularly on priority scientific areas identified.
- **Specific countries**
  - **Mexico** – Support to the Government for the creation of a national network for food safety (to strengthen the application of risk analysis);
  - **Indonesia**, **Malaysia** and **Mexico** – Links with Research Institutions and other FAO collaborating centres to work on joint programming initiatives in scientific advice;
  - **Cameroon**, **Mali**, **Serbia**, **Uganda** and **expand to other countries** –Technical support for scientific data collection activities to strengthen evidence base of national food control measures.
- **Regional and Subregional Groupings**
  - **APEC**, **ASEAN**, **CARICOM**, **ECOWAS**, **MERCOSUR**, **SADC** and **UEMOA** – Assist in preparing and/or the implementation of risk analysis frameworks for enhanced food safety;
  - **Latin America** (involving Argentina, Brazil, Chile Mexico and Peru) – Support for the expansion of a regional database on *Vibrio* spp. in seafood products.

4. Our aims: 'Science for Safe Food' strategy, 2010–2013

Activities for Expansion with GIFSA Resources

Table 1 below outlines the *ongoing activities* within FAO's scientific advice for food safety remit, as well as the activities *ear-marked for expansion* within this strategy requesting extrabudgetary support through the GIFSA Trust Fund.

Table 1. 'Science for Safe Food' activity plan

Ongoing activities	Planned expansion under GIFSA
Objective 1. Provide expert scientific advice To expand and improve the timeliness and quality of the scientific advice that is globally relevant for the development of Codex standards and national food control measures	
• Regular interaction with Codex and member countries-prioritization of requests and reporting results.	• Strengthened interaction with Codex and member countries, enhanced set of criteria for medium-term prioritization • Increased ability to deal with requests and ensuring timely reporting of high quality advice.
• Scientific advice generated on priority issues through expert meetings (JECFA, JEMRA and JMPR) as well as additional ad hoc meetings requests.	• Better able to respond to emerging issues (including emergencies) as highlighted in Section 3 above, through regular expert and *ad hoc* meetings as well as electronic platforms for discussion.
• Multidisciplinary Global Rosters of experts.	• Increased global representation and multidisciplinary spread of expertise.
Objective 2. Disseminate scientific information To broadly disseminate food-related scientific advice and promote its use, particularly by member countries, within the wider framework of their food control systems	
• Production of scientific reports in a variety of languages. • Publication on the FAO Website.	• Enhanced web-platform on scientific advice to enhance access and provide support for building communities of experts at all levels.
• Dissemination of information via Codex sessions and FAO field projects and activities.	• Improved dissemination and guidance on use of advice through FAO field projects and activities.

(continued)

Table 1 (cont.). 'Science for Safe Food' activity plan

Ongoing activities	Planned expansion under GIFSA
Objective 3. Strengthen national and regional scientific capacity. Enhance capacities to: • interpret and use available international scientific advice to strengthen national food control systems • generate locally relevant data as the basis for evidence-based approaches to food safety • generate quality national and regional data and contribute experts to the international arena	
• Ongoing collaboration with member countries in response to capacity building requests through ongoing field projects and activities.	• Targeted and collaboratively designed country assessments – exploring existing scientific capacity and gaps in e.g. risk assessment, application of scientific advice, data generation, and expanded contribution to global arena.
• Contacts and informal network of food control officials, scientists and academia to partner with FAO in needs assessment and implementation of projects and activities.	• Expand contacts and collaboration on needs particularly relating to scientific advice.

• Ongoing capacity building activities, such as:
  • Regional and National Workshops to increase knowledge of expert committee procedures and practices e.g. JMPR and JECFA
  • Series of activities to enhance knowledge of risk analysis at national and regional level.
  • Development of *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* JEMRA web tool
  • Support for development of regional database in Latin America on *Vibrio* spp. in seafood products.
  • Support to selected countries to generate data on priority food safety issues, including food consumption studies e.g. Uganda, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam.
	• Targeted capacity building activities – Development of tools and methods, workshops, twinning and mentoring schemes on priority areas, including:
	  • Increased training to further enhance knowledge of expert committees.
	  • Targeted national and regional training to deepen the practical understanding and application of risk analysis.
	  • Pilot test of *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* JEMRA web tool: Brazil, Mexico, Serbia, Thailand and Uganda.
	  • Expansion of *Vibrio* spp. database to other countries/regions.
	  • Expansion of data collection activities to other countries and perhaps regional data collection studies.

Objective 4. Build scientific communities and networks To strengthen partnership and collaboration with the scientific advice community at all levels	

• Regional and national level contacts facilitated through:
  • CAC and FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees
  • National Ministries and Authorities responsible for food safety
  • National Universities – Research Centres.
  • APEC, ASEAN, CARICOM, ECOWAS, MERCOSUR, SADC and UEMOA.
	• Regional and national level:
	  • More strategic and expanded partnerships with Research Centres/ potential FAO Reference Centres, in Asia, Africa, Near East, Europe, Latin America and Caribbean: two per region.
	  • Increased use of existing experts and data from developing and transition countries.
	  • Work more closely with regional groupings such as: APEC, ASEAN, CARICOM, ECOWAS, MERCOSUR, SADC and UEMOA.

(continued)

Table 1 (cont.). 'Science for Safe Food' activity plan

Ongoing activities	Planned expansion under GIFSA

• Global Level:
  • Regular contact with International Initiatives/Bodies: EMPRES, FERG, INFOSAN, OIE, EFSA and International Non-Governmental Organizations.
	• Global level:
	  • Expanded collaboration with: EMPRES, INFOSAN, OIE and EFSA.
	  • Explore new opportunities to access the scientific advice community through existing initiatives e.g. through JIFSAN and GFN.

Objective 5. Ensure sustainability and measure success To ensure FAO's capacity to respond efficiently and effectively, in partnership with WHO, and measure success in achieving aims of this Strategy	
• Workplan meetings: FAO AGN and Strategic Objective D collaborators..	• Set up of a steering committee for the Strategy and the GIFSA Trust Fund including external advisory members.
• Interaction at CAC and Codex Executive Committee, and other Codex Meetings.	• Strengthened interaction and visibility of 'Science for Safe Food' alongside Codex and other international Organizations.
• Annual High-Level Meetings with WHO as well as ongoing coordination of activities associated with food-related scientific advice.	• Enhanced meeting and interaction at a management coordination level with WHO and other International Organizations.
• Regular FAO reporting procedures.	• External Mid-term and End-term Evaluation of Strategy Cycle.
• Implementation of GIFSA Resource Mobilization Strategy co-developed alongside this Strategy.	• Execute expanded activities as resources are received.

5. Strategy impact

Outcomes and success indicators, against which FAO will measure the overall impact of the Strategy are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. 'Science for Safe Food' strategy impact

Hierachy	Outcomes	Indicators of success
Goal		
To serve, in partnership with WHO, as the leading global reference for scientifically based food standards and guidance on science-based approaches to improve global food safety and afford adequate levels of consumer protection, and facilitate trade.	At global, regional and national levels: • Enhanced health and wellness • Sustained food production and food security • Strengthened food control systems • Increased ability to avoid or deal with food-related emergencies • Increased trade and access to global markets • Poverty alleviation	• Reduction of hunger • Increased and sustained food production and employment • Fewer food-related emergencies • Growing economies • Decreased levels of extreme poverty
Core objectives		
1. Providing expert advice	Improved timeliness, responsiveness and quality of scientific advice provided to Codex and member countries, and expanded response to priority requests that are of global relevance and serve as the basis for setting international and national food-safety standards	• Reduction in time required to respond to requests • Utilization of scientific advice at international and national levels • Feedback received and requests for further scientific advice
2. Disseminating scientific information	Increased access and enhanced awareness about the importance of use of science in decision-making at a national, regional and global level	• Broad utilization of web-based information platform • Accessibility increased, whereby scientific advice used and referenced by national and regional authorities and scientific community • Feedback and requests for publications and further information

(continued)

5. Strategy impact

Table 2 (cont.). 'Science for Safe Food' strategy impact

Hierachy	Outcomes	Indicators of success
Core objectives		
3. Strengthening national scientific capacity	Increased national and regional capacity to: • interpret and apply international scientific advice as a basis for food control systems • generate locally relevant data to strengthen food safety within a country or region • more active input to international scientific advice activities, through provision of data and involvement of experts	• Evidence of science-based approaches at national and regional level • Increased data generation and data management • Greater percentage of experts accepted for Rosters • Broader involvement of experts from developing and transition countries
4. Building scientific communities and networks	Strengthened networking, information sharing and communication globally, among the scientific community in each Codex region, and with FAO and WHO	• Increased number of FAO Reference Centres • Existence of successful virtual networks on scientific food safety issues • Increased linkages with existing networks at all levels • Evidence of regional collaboration and development of future initiatives
5. Sustainability and measuring success	Strengthened FAO capacity that will lead to successful delivery of the strategy objectives	• Positive feedback on impact of the strategy at international and regional levels • Levels of extrabudgetary funds and in-kind support received • Overall increased awareness and strengthened capacity

6. Strategic partnerships

FAO is aware that an ambitious strategy requires a partnership approach, and therefore will actively build upon existing and new partnerships at a global, regional and national level to reach its aims. WHO is FAO's primary partner in the provision of food-related scientific advice, and the existing close collaboration between the UN agencies will be further enhanced. Additionally, partnership with other global scientific providers will be sought (as described in Table 1).

Partnerships will also be built with regional Organizations and member countries through the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees within Codex, to identify gaps on issues important to a specific regional context. Furthermore, partnership will be strengthened with organizations such as EFSA, and national ministries and authorities responsible for food safety for collaboration on common food safety issues. Regional and country-based scientific research centres and universities will also be important strategic partners in offering support to enhancing expert capacity and for the collection and interpretation of data at a national level.

■ Working together

7. Overall budget

FAO devotes significant resources to the provision of food-related scientific advice. It also relies on in-kind contributions, such as the availability of experts at expert meetings, professional secondments to FAO, and provision of data from countries and regions.

Due to the increase in the demand, as described above, FAO requires additional resources in order to continue to fully respond in a timely manner with high quality scientific advice and related activities. FAO therefore requests extrabudgetary funds amounting to **USD 7 638 800** to meet the expanded and changing remit in its provision of scientific advice over the next four years, which amounts to **42 percent** of the overall cost.

The extrabudgetary funds, received through the Global Initiative for Food-related Scientific Advice (GIFSA), and their related costs for the expansion of activities (outlined in Table 1) are detailed in Table 3. Please reference GCP/GLO/209/MUL on any corrispondence.

Table 3 . Overall strategy budget and GIFSA request

Source		Four-Year Total USD
1. FAO Regular Budget for the Provision of Scientific Advice		6 400 000
2. Estimated In-kind Contributions – *primarily from member governments/academia (secondments to FAO and experts in meetings)*		4 000 000
3. ***Extrabudgetary Request via GIFSA***		7 638 800
Total four-year Budget		**18 038 800**
Percentage of Extrabudgetary/GIFSA Resources Requested		***42%***
GIFSA details		
Obj. Line	Strategy elements	
1.	Providing expert advice	1 920 000
2.	Disseminating scientific information	160 000
3.	Strengthening national scientific capacity	2 800 000
4.	Building scientific communities and networks	120 000
5.	Sustainability and measuring success	2 638 800
Total request GIFSA		**7 638 800**

8. Management and accountability

It is against this Strategy document that FAO will account and report on the use of both FAO regular funding and the use of GIFSA funds through regular FAO reporting mechanisms, as well as an independent mid-term and end term evaluation of the Strategy cycle. A Steering Committee will be formed at FAO to oversee the Strategy and the management of GIFSA funds, which will include external advisory experts to FAO. Feedback and direction received from Codex, donors and national governments (as the key beneficiaries) will also be considered with utmost importance.

Reporting on use of funds

9. Sustainability

Planning for the future

Continuation of FAO's Scientific Advice service will rely on the availability of experts at expert meetings, the provision of data, and ongoing funds to be made available from FAO's Regular Programme Budget, upon the completion of this Strategy cycle. GIFSA will help to further the existing efforts of FAO to communicate and raise awareness of the benefits of the provision of international scientific advice on food safety, quality and nutrition, and thereby – in the longer term - secure wider support to meet its aims. In addition, regional and country level capacities will be enhanced through GIFSA, to contribute to and more effectively utilize the global scientific advice generated within their own food control systems. FAO should therefore see increased participation and commitment at a regional and country level to the Strategy.

GIFSA funds will also contribute to the strategic vision and goals within the Codex Alimentarius Commission Strategic Plan, 2008-2013, which states that the independence of the FAO/WHO expert bodies providing scientific basis is critical, and emphasizes that the timely availability of scientific advice is a prerequisite for Codex to fulfil its mandate. The longevity of FAO/WHO scientific advice activities is therefore essential.

Acronyms

AGN	Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division, FAO
AGP	Plant Production and Protection Division, FAO
APEC	Asian Pacific Economic Corporation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAC	The Codex Alimentarius Commission
CARICOM	Comunità e Mercato Comune Caraibici
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
EMPRES	Emergency Prevention System
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GFN	The Global Food borne Infections Network
GIFSA	Global Initiative for Food-related Scientific Advice
INFOSAN	The International Food Safety Authorities Network
JECFA	Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives
JECN	Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Nutrition
JEMRA	Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on Microbial Risk Assessment
JIFSAN	The Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition
JMPR	Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues
JMPS	Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Specifications
NGOs	Non-governmental organizations

Acronyms

OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SPS Agreement	WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
UEMOA	Union économique monétaire ouest-africaine
USFDA	United States Food and Drug Authority
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

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Science *for* Safe Food

The Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division (AGN) has launched the "Science for Safe Food Strategy" to mobilise resources to further strengthen FAO's work on the provision of scientific advice and build capacity on science-based approaches at country level.

The Strategy is integral to FAO's Strategic Objective D: *Improved Quality and safety of foods at all stages of the food chain*, and is coupled with FAO's Medium-Term Plan (2010–2013). It focusses on key activities under five core objectives outlining potential areas for partnership to achieve safe and nutritious food.

FAO invites all relevant parties including member countries, the scientific community and interested donors to dialogue and engage with us on how to best implement this Strategy in the global context. In addition, FAO seeks funds through the newly launched multi-donor trust fund, the Global Initiative for Food-related Scientific Advice (GIFSA).