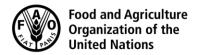
CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION





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REP19/EXEC1

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

42nd Session

CICG, Geneva, Switzerland, 7 - 12 July 2019

REPORT OF THE SEVENTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy, 7 July 2018

REP19/EXEC1

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission held its 76th Session (CCEXEC76) at the Headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in Rome, Italy, on 7 July 2018. A list of participants is contained in Appendix I.

2. The Chairperson of the Commission, Mr Guilherme da Costa Junior (Brazil), opened the meeting, in the presence of the Codex Secretary, Mr Tom Heilandt, Head of the Food Safety and Quality Unit of FAO, Ms Renata Clarke, and Coordinator, Department of Zoonoses and Food Safety of the World Health Organization (WHO), Ms Angelika Tritscher.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda item 1)

- 3. CCEXEC76 adopted the following amended provisional agenda:
 - I. Adoption of the Agenda
 - II. Development of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025
 - a) Process and Timeline (CRD2)
 - b) Terms of Reference of Second CCEXEC Strategic-Planning Subcommittee (CRD1)
 - III. Codex Communications Work Plan 2017-2019: Implementation Status (CX/EXEC 18/75/4)
 - IV. Regular Review of Codex Work Management: Report 2017-2018 (CX/CAC 18/41/13)
 - V. Regular Review of Codex Work Management: Topic 2018-2019 (CX/EXEC 18/75/5)
 - VI. Applications from International Non-Governmental Organizations for Observer Status in Codex (CX/EXEC 18/75/7)
 - VII. Any Other Business
- 4. CCEXEC76 further agreed to consider the following matters under item 7, "Any other business":
 - i. Deferral of the FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committees (proposed by the Coordinator for the Latin America and the Caribbean Region (LAC));
 - ii. Organization of the CAC agenda (proposed by the Coordinator for LAC);
 - iii. Exchange of views regarding the critical review, including chairpersons' comments and how best to address them (proposed by the Member from Europe);
 - iv. The use of the Russian language in Codex (proposed by the Coordinator for Europe);
 - v. The role of CCEXEC (CRD3) (proposed by the Chairperson); and
 - vi. Forthcoming Session.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025 (Agenda item 2)

Process and Timeline (Agenda item 2a)1

Conclusion

CCEXEC76:

- i. agreed on its ambition to submit the draft strategic plan for endorsement by CAC42 in accordance with the timeline (Appendix II);
- ii. noted that to do so would require a round of physical meetings in all regions in the period between August and November 2018;
- iii. welcomed the offer from the Codex Secretariat of assistance in facilitating and supporting such meetings in close cooperation with regional coordinators and host countries, making use of planned workshops and other relevant events; and
- iv. noted the possibility for further review in the margins of other committees, including at the thirty-first session of the Codex Committee on General Principles.

¹ Inclusiveness and timeliness in the development of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 (CRD2).

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Terms Of Reference Of Second CCEXEC Strategic-Planning Subcommittee (Agenda item 2b)² Conclusion

6. CCEXEC76 agreed to the terms of reference of the second strategic-planning subcommittee of CCEXEC (Appendix III).

7. CCEXEC76 agreed to retain the existing wording of Activity 2.3.3 in the Action Plan with the addition of a footnote clarifying the consideration of factors as in the Strategic Plan 2014-2019³.

CODEX COMMUNICATIONS WORK PLAN 2017-2019: IMPLEMENTATION STATUS (Agenda item 3)⁴ Conclusion

8. CCEXEC76:

- i. recognized the importance of the communications work developed by the Codex Secretariat and recommended it continue based on the 2017-2019 work plan, looking forward to the promotion of the importance of Codex for all actors involved in food safety and fair practices in food trade; and
- ii. noted that such activities supported the delivery of the Strategic Plan objective that Codex standards be used globally and therefore required adequate resources.

REGULAR REVIEW OF CODEX WORK MANAGEMENT: REPORT 2017-2018 (Agenda item 4)⁵ Conclusion

9. CCEXEC76 noted the conclusions of CAC41 (REP 18/CAC, paras. 109-121) and requested that the Codex Secretariat prepare a paper to support further discussion at CCEXEC77 on recommendations (ii), (iii) and (iv) of the 2017-2018 Regular Review of Codex Work Management.

REGULAR REVIEW OF CODEX WORK MANAGEMENT: TOPIC 2018-2019 (Agenda item 5)⁶ Conclusion

10. CCEXEC76:

- noted the selection of "the critical review function of the Executive Committee" as the topic for the regular review of Codex work management for 2018-2019, recalling that critical review by CCEXEC facilitated the work of CAC;
- ii. requested that the Codex Secretariat take account of comments made during CCEXEC767 in conducting the review; and
- iii. in subsequent meetings of CCEXEC, this agenda item could also include substantive discussion of other initiatives that might improve work management in Codex.

APPLICATIONS FROM INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR OBSERVER STATUS IN CODEX (Agenda item 6)8

Conclusion

- 11. CCEXEC76 recommended that the Directors-General of FAO and WHO:
 - i. grant observer status to the Federación Panamerica de Lechería (FEPALE) and the International Ready-to-Use Foods Association (IRUFA); and
 - ii. grant observer status to Tea & Herbal Infusions Europe (THIE) subject to the following conditions to avoid double representation: "At meetings where FoodDrinkEurope is represented, THIE can only participate as part of the FoodDrinkEurope delegation and cannot speak as THIE. THIE can submit written comments only on those issues for which FoodDrinkEurope does not submit any comments. THIE would only participate as such in Codex meetings when FoodDrinkEurope is not represented."

² Terms of reference for second strategic planning sub-committee of CCEXEC (CRD1)

³ Text of additional footnote: "The consideration of other factors in the Codex standard-setting process is governed by the Statements of Principle Concerning the Role of Science in the Codex Decision-Making Process and the Extent to Which Other Factors are Taken into Account."

⁴ CX/EXEC 18/75/4

⁵ CX/CAC 18/41/13

⁶ CX/EXEC 18/75/5

⁷ Audio recording available on the CCEXEC76 webpage.

⁸ CX/EXEC 18/75/7

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ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda item 7)

Deferral of the FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committees (RCCs)

Conclusion

12. CCEXEC76:

 expressed concern regarding the postponement of the RCCs but recognized the challenges having led to the decision, and requested that the Regional Coordinators and the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission be consulted prior to any such decision in future should similar circumstances arise;

- II. noted the Codex Secretariat's explanation of the difficulties having led to the decision and its commitment to hold prior consultations with Regional Coordinators and the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission should such circumstances arise in future; and
- III. noted the statement of the representative of FAO recognizing the central role of the RCCs, reiterating that their postponement should not be construed as diminishing the importance of their work in the Codex structure, and reaffirming that such disruptions should be avoided in future.

Organization of the CAC agenda

Conclusion

13. CCEXEC76, recognizing the need to improve time management during sessions of the Codex Alimentarius Commission to ensure due consideration was given to the items on its agenda, agreed that the Codex Secretariat would work with the Commission Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons to identify potential solutions and report to CCEXEC77 in that regard, making pertinent materials available to CCEXEC members in advance.

Exchange of views regarding the critical review, including Chairpersons' comments and how best to address them

Conclusion

14. The Committee recalled it had considered these matters under item agenda 5.

The use of the Russian language in Codex

Conclusion

15. CCEXEC76 noted the concern expressed by the Regional Coordinator for Europe regarding the need to improve the use of the Russian language in Codex work.

The role of CCEXEC9

Conclusion

16. CCEXEC76 agreed to examine CRD3 and discuss the matter further at CCEXEC77.

Forthcoming Session

17. The Executive Committee agreed to convene its next session in Geneva, Switzerland, immediately preceding CAC42, with arrangements to be confirmed in advance by the Codex Secretariat.

⁹ The Role of the CCEXEC prepared by the Chair and the Vice-Chairs of the CAC (CRD3 of CCEXEC75).

Appendix I

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Appendix II

INCLUSIVENESS AND TIMELINESS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025

CCEXEC75 recalled the importance of inclusiveness and timeliness in the development of its new Strategic Plan. Members also recalled the value of regional consultation and the chairperson highlighted the need to use innovative approaches to achieving this. In this context informal discussions were held between the CAC Bureau, the Regional coordinators and the Secretariat to consider possible options.

Some of the important principles that emerged from the discussion were:

- strategic planning is an evolutionary process;
- regions and their members own the plan, which requires their active participation in its construction;
- regional coordinators play a key role in promoting engagement in the discussions on the strategic plan
- regional implementation of the plan will be key.

Bearing the above in mind, it was agreed that we should aim to facilitate opportunities for discussion, both electronically and physically, that are tailored to the individual needs of the regions and focused on the strategic plan, rather than applying an overly rigid approach. To facilitate further discussion and potential agreement at CCEXEC76 on a framework for regional engagement, a timetable for completion is proposed below.

The proposed process, to facilitate adoption at CAC 42, provides three opportunities for discussion at the regional level – two on the content of the strategic plan (in July-November 2018 and in January-March 2019 (with the opportunity of meeting in the margins of CCGP as an option)), with the document being available for a final round before CCEXEC 77 and CAC42. The RCCs would then facilitate the development of regional implementation roadmaps¹⁰ for their respective regions.

While noting that a decision on the timetable for the completion of the new Strategic Plan would be discussed at CCEXEC76, the process below outlines the steps to be taken towards adoption at CAC 42. If it is agreed to extend the timetable for development, it is proposed that this would simply lengthen the period for consultation (Rounds 2 and 3) and that the final drafting would take place in December 2019 rather than April 2019. As the discussions highlighted the importance of having a regional roadmap for implementation of the Strategic Plan and, irrespective of the timetable followed, it is proposed that this be considered at the next round of Regional Coordination Meetings, in September-October 2019.

Process of engagement and revision of the Strategic Plan to support adoption at CAC42

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¹⁰ In line with the observation that regions and members own the strategic plan, development of a regional roadmap for implementation is envisaged, as enabling the Regional Coordinating Committees to identify the specific activities where they would take leadership, identify where regions can lead the provision of relevant data etc. to help in monitoring the implementation of the strategic plan (building on existing data collection mechanisms where possible), and where regions could use the output to further promote and facilitate the work of Codex.

Timeline	Action
1 August 2018	A circular letter requesting comments issued together with the revised Strategic Plan based on discussions at CCEXEC75 (and CCEXEC76)
1 August 2018 - 30 November 2018 (Round 1 of comments)	Face to face discussions convened in each region, using the margins of existing scheduled meetings or workshops where possible. These meetings would be proceeded by a proactive electronic discussion promoted by the regional coordinator and supported by the Codex secretariat. Their aim would be to familiarise members in the region with the plan, and promote the importance of comments from members in this first iteration.
30 November 2018	Deadline for comments from countries
1 December 2018 – 15 January 2019	Revision of the Strategic Plan based on first round of comments. Drafting Group meeting convened in December (possibly in the margins of a subsidiary body meeting) to incorporate the comments received from the open comment period
16 January 2019 (approx.)	Circular Letter issued requesting members' comments and, to the extent possible, regional positions on the revised version of the Strategic Plan.
16 January – 30 April 2019 (Round 2 of comments)	Comment period on the revised version. Regional coordinators are encouraged to seek regional input to inform regional positions through electronic means or face-to-face discussions (e.g. in the margins of CCGP). Further comments from individual members would also be welcome.
1 – 30 May 2019	Final revision of the Strategic Plan by the Drafting Group.
1 June 2019	Final draft strategic plan in all languages posted on the CAC42 and CCEXEC77 webpages
1 – 4 July 2019	Discussion and recommendation on next steps by CCEXEC77
8 – 12 July 2019	Discussed and, if agreed, adopted at CAC
September – October 2019	Regional roadmaps for the implementation of the strategic plan discussed by the RCCs

Appendix III

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR SECOND STRATEGIC PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE OF CCEXEC

Scope of work:

To develop a complete draft of the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 for consideration by CCEXEC77 and endorsement by CAC42.

Timetable and deliverables:

The sub-committee will start work on 1 August 2018. It will:

- develop a revised draft of the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 by the end of December 2018, taking account
 of comments received by members during the consultation period which will take place between
 August and November 2018;
- (ii) develop a further revised draft of the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 by the end of May 2019, taking account of comments received by members during the consultation period which will take place between January and April 2019; and
- (iii) consider and draft, throughout the period between August 2018 and May 2019, text relating to matters that require further consideration in an iterative manner, as identified in paragraph 53 of the report of CCEXEC75.

Membership and ways of working:

The sub-committee will be chaired by Vice-Chair, Steve Wearne, with Vice-Chair, Mariam Eid as alternate chair. The sub-committee will primarily work electronically using the online platform. All members of CCEXEC will be able to register and participate. Physical drafting meetings are envisaged in November/December 2018 and May 2019. Further physical meetings may be convened if necessary. The sub-committee will work in English.