

INTRODUCTION

1. The forty-third Session of the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU) was held in Düsseldorf, Germany, from 7 to 10 March 2023, with virtual report adoption on 15 March 2023, at the kind invitation of the Federal Government of Germany. Dr Anja Brönstrup from the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Germany, and Ms Martine Püster from the Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety, Germany, served as Chairperson and Co-Chairperson of the Session respectively. The Session was attended by 60 Member Countries, one Member Organisation and 29 Observer organisations. A list of participants is given in Appendix I.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

2. The Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture, Dr. Ophelia Nick, Germany, welcomed delegates via a video message. Dr. Doris Heberle from the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Germany, gave the opening address. She underlined the unique mandate of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, to protect consumer health and ensure fair practices in the food trade at a time when health protection and the elimination of trade barriers were more important than ever in a globalised world.
3. The Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), Steve Wearne (United Kingdom), Francesco Branca, World Health Organization (WHO), Fatima Hachem, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Tom Heilandt, Codex Secretary also addressed the meeting.

Division of competence¹

4. CCNFSDU43 noted the division of competence between the European Union (EU) and its Member States, according to paragraph 5, Rule II of the Rules of Procedure of the Codex Alimentarius Commission as presented in CRD1.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda Item 1)²

5. CCNFSDU43 adopted the Provisional Agenda as the Agenda for the session and agreed to establish the following in-session working groups under the respective agenda items:
6. Agenda Item 6 – Technological justification for several food additives, chaired by the EU, working in English, French and Spanish with the following terms of reference:
 - a) To discuss the technological justification of the following additives for use in the *Standard for Infant Formula and Formulas for Special Medical Purposes Intended for Infants* (CXS 72-1981):
 - i. low acyl clarified gellan gum (INS 418)
 - ii. ascorbyl palmitate (INS 304)
 - iii. mixed tocopherol concentrates (INS 307b)
 - iv. phosphates (INS 339(i), 339(ii) and 339(iii) and INS 340(i), 340(ii), and 340(iii))
 - b) To discuss the plan/programme for the consideration of the remaining food additives in Annex 2 to Circular Letter (CL) 2022/80/OCS-NFSDU
7. Agenda Item 8a – Methods of analysis, co-chaired by the United States of America and the EU, working in English, French and Spanish with the following terms of reference:

To consider

- a) Analytical methods for provisions in the *Standard for Infant Formula and Formulas for Special Medical Purposes Intended for Infants* (CXS 72-1981) (CRD4);
- b) the request from CCMAS41 relating to the methods for fructans, beta-carotene and lycopene in CXS 72-181 (CX/NFSDU 23/43/2 Rev, para. 18 and CRDs 10, 20, 23, 25), and
- c) the appropriate methods for assessing sweetness of carbohydrate sources in "Drink for young children with added nutrients or Product for young children with added nutrients or Drink for young children or Product for young children" (CRDs 11, 16, 18).

¹ CRD1 (Annotated Agenda – Division of competence between the EU and its Member States)

² CX/NFSDU 23/43/1

MATTERS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND/OR OTHER SUBSIDIARY BODIES (Agenda Item 2)³

8. CCNFSDU43 noted that some matters were for information only, and that the following matters as outlined in paragraph 18 of document CX/NFSDU 23/43/2 Rev would be considered under the relevant agenda items as follows:
- reply from CCFL46 relating to nutrient profiles (Agenda Item 7)
 - request from CCMAS41 relating to the methods for fructans, beta-carotene and lycopene in CXS 72-1981 (Agenda Item 8a).
9. CCNFSDU43 agreed that the request from CCEXEC83 in paragraph 19; i.e., to give due regard to ongoing global efforts to achieve health and nutrition related goals through reducing noncommunicable diseases (NCD) risk factors such as sodium intake; will continue to be taken into account when considering new standards or during the review of standards relating to composition of foods.

MATTERS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM FAO AND WHO (Agenda Item 3)⁴

10. The Representative of FAO reported on the joint FAO/WHO scientific advice activities, in particular the work related to the update of nutrient intake values (NIVs) for infants and young children from birth through three years of age. She informed the Committee of the progress to date in the work related to the NIVs of Calcium, Vitamin and Zinc, noting that the draft NIVs for the three nutrients would be available in September 2023.
11. The Representative also reported on the FAO commissioned report to assess, categorize and rank the methods used to derive Dietary Intake Reference Values (DIRVs) for protein and 24 micronutrients for older infants (6-12 months) and young children (12-36 months). She informed the Committee that the report had been shared with the Electronic Working Group (EWG) on the establishment of NRVs-R for persons aged 6-36 months.
12. The Representative presented other activities highlighted in CX/FNFSDU 21/43/3 that could be of interest to the Committee including an update on the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025, the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022, and the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition.
13. The Representative further informed the Committee of the outcomes of a Joint IAEA/FAO meeting on the Way Forward for the Assessment of Protein Requirements and Protein Quality and for the Development of a Protein Digestibility and Quality Database (October 2022), the new FAO methodology to develop and implement Food Systems-Based dietary Guidelines, the launch of the School Food Global Hub in support of the Peer-to-Peer Initiative under the School Meals Coalition, and the joint FAO/UNICEF global capacity development initiative for education officials and curriculum developers.
14. The Representative of WHO highlighted the WHO activities of interest to the on-going work of the Committee. These included the activities related to Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) - development of the 2021 WHO guideline on the dairy protein content in RUTF for treatment of uncomplicated severe acute malnutrition; a 2021 technical workshop to improve availability of RUTF; a soon-to-be published guideline on wasting management, which includes updated recommendation on the quantity and duration of RUTF usage; a joint application of WHO and UNICEF to add RUTF to the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines (EML); and the complementary feeding guidelines expected to be released shortly. The Representative of WHO further referred to studies in 2022 on the Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes, and a global congress on the Code to be held in June 2023.
15. The Representative drew the attention of the Committee to the forthcoming Nutrition Guidance Expert Advisory Group (NUGAG) guidelines on diet and health: total fat; saturated fatty acids and trans-fatty acids; carbohydrates; non-sugar sweeteners; polyunsaturated fatty acids; and low-sodium salt substitutes. The forthcoming NUGAG guidelines on policy actions were also highlighted: food marketing; fiscal policies; school food and nutrition policies; and nutrition labelling policies.
16. In addition to the global elimination of industrially-produced trans-fatty acids (TFA) by 2023 as well as the first Global Report on Sodium Reduction, the Representative also informed the Committee of two additional activities. These were past and ongoing work on nutrient profile models and the call for experts for the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on the Risks and Benefits of Fish Consumption scheduled in October 2023.

³ CX/NFSDU 23/43/2 Rev; CRD10 (Mali, Niger and Nigeria); CRD20 (Kenya); CRD23 (African Union); CRD25 (Senegal)

⁴ CX/NFSDU 23/43/3

Conclusion

17. CCNFSDU43 noted the information provided by FAO and WHO and expressed its thanks for their work in commissioning and providing scientific advice.

REVIEW OF THE STANDARD FOR FOLLOW-UP FORMULA (CXS 156-1987): PREAMBLE AND STRUCTURE (AT STEP4) (Agenda Item 4)⁵

18. The Chairperson of the EWG, New Zealand, speaking on behalf of the Co-chairpersons France and Indonesia, provided an overview of the history and status of the work on the revision of the *Follow-Up Formula Standard* (CXS 156-1987) highlighting:
- the extensive global scientific data gathered on nutrient requirements and the role of these products in the diet to underpin the composition of the products for the two age ranges;
 - the key compositional improvements made in the draft revised standard compared to the 1987 version;
 - the establishment of provisions for optimized protein levels and enhanced protein quality to meet the needs of older infants and young children; that there is now a ban on the use of partially hydrogenated fats and oils for both product categories and the establishment of carbohydrate provisions for both product categories that includes maximum levels and guidance on carbohydrate sources, and,
 - that whilst the Committee acknowledges that Follow-up Formula for older infants and Product for young children are not considered nutritionally necessary in the diets of older infants and young children, there is agreement that as these products are commonly consumed and commonly traded it is considered essential that they are adequately regulated.
19. The EWG Chairperson highlighted further how the Committee has used the WHO/World Health Assembly (WHA) documents to inform the labelling provisions as illustrated within CRD3 providing for a significant level of regulation over the labelling of these products that will result in greater restriction and control than in the current standard.
20. The EWG Chairperson reminded the Committee that the draft revised standard has been in development for over 10 years and has included eight EWGs and two physical working groups (PWG), 19 consultation papers, eight agenda papers, two scientific reports from FAO and one from JEMNU on protein quality and nitrogen conversion factors.
21. The CCNFSDU Chairperson recalled that CCNFSDU42 had agreed to keep the remaining sections of the text at Step 4 on the understanding that all issues in Sections A and B had been addressed and no further discussions were required. CCNFSDU42 had further agreed to hold the scope, description and labelling and essential composition of Sections A and B at Step 7 to advance the entire standard to the Commission for adoption once all outstanding points had been addressed.
22. In March 2022, a CL was circulated seeking comments on the last two remaining aspects of the draft revised standard, the Structure and the Preamble. Comments received in response to this CL informed the recommendations put forward to CCNFSDU43 in CRD2.

Structure of the standard

23. Based on the clear majority of the respondents to the CL, CRD2 recommended one standard in two parts as the structure of the standard; part A covering follow-up formula for older infants and part B covering product for young children.
24. The EWG Chairperson explained that the common justification provided in support of this approach was that this is in line with how the Committee has approached and conducted the review of the standard, and that while the two products have different compositions and are intended for two distinct age groups, they are based on a similar concept as being a liquid part of the diversified diet of either older infants or young children.
25. One standard with two parts was seen as an adequate approach to distinguish the two products, as had been done with the *Standard for Infant Formula and Formulas for Special Medical Purposes Intended for Infants* (CXS

⁵ CX/NFSDU 23/43/4; CL2022/24/OCS-NFSDU; CRD2 (New Zealand); CRD3 (New Zealand); CRD11 (Costa Rica, Malaysia, Mali, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, Vietnam, Helen Keller International, ILCA, ISDI, UNICEF); CRD17 (Argentina); CRD19 (Indonesia); CRD 20 (Kenya); CRD23 (African Union); CRD24 (IBFAN); CRD25 (Senegal); CRD27 (Panama); CRD29 (Mexico); CRD30 (Thailand); CRD31 (Russian Federation); CRD34 (Ghana); CRD35 (Costa Rica); CRD38 (Ecuador)

72-1981) covering two compositionally distinct but conceptually similar product categories.

Discussion

26. Views expressed by delegations in favour of a single standard with two parts included: that some countries regulate products for the entire age range of 6-36 months; the need for harmonizing and simplifying the standard at the international level; that a single standard was a more simple and adequate approach to distinguish the two product categories; it provided consistency with CXS 72-1981, and the need to provide a safeguard as both products are regulated as breastmilk substitutes in some countries.
27. There were also views expressed for either two separate standards which was deemed more logical due to the differences in composition; or a single standard that covered four different products, which included the products covered by CXS 72-1981.
28. The CCNFSDU Chairperson summarized the discussion noting overwhelming support for establishing one standard with two parts: Part A covering follow-up formula for older infants and Part B covering product for young children. The Chairperson noted that delegations had underlined their preference for a pragmatic approach that would enable the timely completion of the revision of the standard.

Conclusion on the structure

29. CCNFSDU43 agreed to progress with one standard with two parts.

Name of the standard

30. In response to a question posed by the Chairperson on rules and approaches for renaming the revised standard, the Codex Secretary confirmed that the name of the standard, in accordance with the Procedural Manual (PM), should be as clear and concise as possible. In this case that would mean establishing a new name indicating both follow-up formula for older infants and product for young children in a new title, and that if a fully informative title was inordinately long, a footnote could be included on the first page of the Standard to capture all naming conventions.
31. The Codex Secretary proposed that the title of the revised standard be the *Standard for Follow-up Formula for Older Infants and Product for Young Children* with a footnote stating; other equivalent names for this product are *Drink for Young Children with Added Nutrients* or *Product for Young Children with Added Nutrients* or *Drink for Young Children*.

Conclusion on the name of the standard

32. CCNFSDU43 agreed to rename the draft revised standard as proposed.

Preamble

33. The Chairperson recalled that Circular Letter (CL) 2022/24/OCS-NFSDU asked delegations whether they considered a preamble necessary and if so, what detail it should contain. The CL had recalled that any preamble texts should not be in conflict with the provisions of the Standard, or be more stringent than the composition and labelling aspects of the standard, as these had already been agreed to by the Committee. The preamble should set the scene by providing the overall context, without specifying any product requirements which are found within the main body of the standard.
34. The EWG Chairperson summarized that CL respondents were almost equally split between those who preferred a simple statement to say that the standard is divided into two parts versus those who supported a more detailed text that referenced WHO documents and/or WHA resolutions.
35. CL responses supporting a more detailed preamble identified policy coherence as the premise for this approach, as the Preamble could act as a prompt to countries that in addition to the standard itself other guidance material and international instruments exist.
36. Those supporting a simple preamble statement or no preamble statement at all were primarily of the view that the Committee had followed the advice of the 75th session of the Executive Committee (CCEXEC75) and incorporated the applicable concepts and guidance from WHO documents and WHA resolutions into the text of the standard itself, making reference to these within the preamble unnecessary.
37. The Chairperson of the Committee reminded the Committee that the PM did not require a text to have a preamble, nor did it provide guidance on the purpose of a preamble and what it should include. She cited several texts that did contain a preamble including the *General Standard for Food Additives* (GSFA, CXS 192-1995), the *General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed* (CXS 193-1995), the recent *Guidelines for Ready-to-*

use *Therapeutic Foods* (CXG 95-2022), and the example most often mentioned in relation to this discussion, the *Standard for Infant Formula and Formulas for Special Medical Purposes Intended for Infants* (CXS 72-1981).

38. The Chairperson further recalled that the Codex Secretariat had previously clarified that the preamble should not address matters outside the scope of Codex, and that discussion on the preamble should be guided by the general principles of the Codex Alimentarius. By means of an example she cited the PM and Section three of the General Principles of The Codex Alimentarius, "*Nature of Codex standards*", which states that "Codex standards and related texts are not a substitute for or alternative to national legislation".

Discussion

39. The Chairperson opened discussions asking delegations to comment on the need for, purpose, and content of a preamble. The rationale provided by those who intervened for including a preamble included the following:

- To set the scene and assist countries in contextualizing the standard.
- To guide countries in the application and implementation of the standard.
- The need to include WHO references and WHA resolutions for the protection of breastfeeding.
- To ensure policy coherence with WHO texts and WHA resolutions.
- The need to include a statement on the importance of breastfeeding.

40. Some delegations supported including a short and precise preamble which should be a factual statement similar to that in the *Standard for Infant Formula and Formulas for Special Medical Purposes Intended for Infants* (CXS 72-1981) which reads: "This Standard is divided into two sections. Section A refers to Infant Formula, and Section B deals with Formulas for Special Medical Purposes Intended for Infants." They noted that all relevant information was contained in the body of the draft revised standard and there was no need to repeat information. Reopening discussion on a preamble could put at risk the consensus reached on the main text of the standard.

41. The Chairperson concluded that in principle there was agreement on including a preamble. She invited the Committee to comment on the different paragraphs proposed in CRD2 as follows:

Paragraph 1 This Standard is divided into two sections. Section A refers to Follow-up Formula for Older Infants, and Section B deals with Drink for Young Children with Added Nutrients, or Product for Young Children with Added Nutrients, or Drink for Young Children, or Product for Young Children.

Paragraph 2 The application of this Standard should be consistent with national health and nutrition policies and relevant national/regional legislation and take into account the recommendations made in the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes, as per the national context.

Paragraph 3 Relevant World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines and policies and World Health Assembly (WHA) resolutions were considered in the development of this Standard and may provide further guidance to countries.

42. In the discussion consensus emerged on Paragraph one which was considered short, concise and factual.
43. Regarding paragraphs 2 and 3, although most delegations could accept the text as drafted, some delegations did not support either or both of paragraphs two and three.
44. A comment was made that paragraph two was unnecessary, inconsistent with international trade obligations and the guidance provided by CCEXEC and would reopen discussions that had already taken place in the Committee.
45. The Chairperson invited the Committee to consider the three proposed Preamble paragraphs as a whole and not attempt to dissect them. Whilst it was self-evident that paragraphs two and three provided context on content that was already covered in the text of the draft revised standard, it was important for some delegations to stress this information again in a prominent position in the Preamble as a starting point for the standard.
46. The Chairperson therefore proposed that the Committee agree to accept all three paragraphs (with the editorial addition of the word "/regional" after the word "national" in paragraph two).

Conclusion on the Preamble

47. The Committee agreed to adopt all three paragraphs as the Preamble to the draft revised standard and noted reservations from the following countries on specific paragraphs of the proposed text:

- Argentina - Reservation to paragraphs two and three
- Colombia – Reservation to para two
- Costa Rica – Reservation to paras two and three
- Cuba - Reservation to paras two and three
- Guatemala - Reservation to paras two and three
- Panama - Reservation to para two
- Morocco – Reservation to para two
- United States of America – Reservation to para two
- Vietnam - Reservation to paras two and three

Overall Conclusion

48. Noting that agreement had been reached on the title, the structure and the Preamble which were at Step 4 and recalling that CCNFSDU42 had already reached agreement on all other issues in the remainder of the text which were currently at Steps 4 and 7, CCNFSDU43 agreed to forward the:
- a) proposed draft revised Name (*Standard for Follow-up Formula for Older Infants and Product for Young Children*); the Structure and the Preamble together with the remaining sections of Part A and B, agreed to at CCNFSDU42, to the CAC46 for adoption at Step 5/8;
 - b) parts of the text at Step 7 of the draft Revised Standard for Follow-up Formula (*Standard for Follow-up Formula for Older Infants and Product for Young Children*) to CAC46 for adoption at Step 8 (Appendix II).

GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NRVS-R FOR PERSONS AGED 6 – 36 MONTHS (Agenda Item 5)⁶

49. Ireland, as EWG/PWG Chairperson, speaking also on behalf of the Co-chairpersons Costa Rica and the United States of America, introduced the work of both the EWG and PWG noting that there had been significant progress on all three assigned tasks i.e. consideration of the draft general principles; a stepwise process to apply the draft general principles for establishing NRVs-R, and the proposed NRVs-R. She highlighted that the draft Stepwise Process needed revision following the changes made to the draft General Principles during the PWG (see CRD05).
50. CCNFSDU43 agreed to the proposal of the Chairperson to use CRD05 as the basis for discussion on the draft General Principles for establishing NRVs-R for persons aged 6 - 36 months.

Recommendation 1 - Preamble

51. Ireland (PWG Chairperson) explained that the working group had broadly supported the proposed draft preamble, in particular the application of the NRVs-R for persons aged 6 – 36 months to be limited to those Foods for Special Dietary Uses (FSDU) targeting this age group. It was agreed not to list the relevant FSDU texts in the Preamble as these would be considered in the main body of CXG 2-1985 with the list of NRVs-R clarifying which foods they applied to. It was also noted that the PWG had recommended not to refer to population weighted values as these were not relevant to this limited age group.
52. CCNFSDU43 agreed to the editorial changes, and endorsed the recommendation noting that the preamble was consistent to that of Annex 1 to the *General Principles for Establishing Nutrient Reference Values for the General Population* (CXG 2-1985).

Recommendation 2 – Definition of Recognized Authoritative Scientific Body (RASB)

53. CCNFSDU43 endorsed the recommendation to adopt the original wording of the definition for the RASB from Annex 1 in CXG 2-1985.

⁶ CX/NFSDU 23/43/5; CX/NFSDU 23/43/5 Add.1; CRD5 (Report of the PWG); CRD8 (Summary of comments by EWG Co-Chairpersons); CRD12 (European Union, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda); CRD19 (Indonesia); CRD20 (Kenya); CRD23 (African Union); CRD25 (Senegal); CRD27 (Panama); CRD29 (Mexico); CRD31 (Russian Federation); CRD32 (El Salvador); CRD34 (Ghana); CRD 35 (Costa Rica)

Recommendation 3

a) Definition for Adequate Intake (AI)

54. CCNFSDU43 considered the recommendation of the PWG to use the WHO definition for Average Intake (AI) and exchanged the following views:
- Adopting the definition from WHO would ensure a consistent approach with the work WHO is completing on nutrient intake values for infants and young children.
 - Adequate Intake is a recommended intake based on observed or experimentally determined approximations or estimates of nutrient intake by a group (or groups) of apparently healthy people that are assumed to be adequate. This definition covers the derivation of DIRVs for persons aged 6 to 36 months, which often involves scaling.
 - If the definition for AI was adopted, the footnote on growth and development could be removed.
 - The proposed definition was unclear as it included a circular definition.
 - Reference to health promotion should not be included in the definition.
 - As the age range for the draft general principles is 6 to 36 months as stated in the preamble, there is no need to include this information in the definition.
 - Annex 1 to CXG 2-1985 did not contain such a definition and there was no need to include it in the proposed draft general principles.
55. Regarding the definition of AI, the Representative of WHO noted that the WHO definition indicated by the delegation from New Zealand came from the 2007 WHO document *Guidelines on food fortification with micronutrients*⁷. In this document a definition is provided for “average intake” which created some confusion with “estimated average intake”, but the Representative clarified that this definition is in fact for “adequate intake” (a separate definition is provided in the same document, same glossary, for estimated average intake). This definition for adequate intake has subsequently been used by others with or without slight modifications since the publication of the 2007 document and is a concise and accurate description of what an adequate intake is.
56. The Representative of WHO further noted that to aid users of the forthcoming FAO-WHO guidance on calcium, vitamin D and zinc intake values and facilitate the work of the EWG and CCNFSDU on the General Principles for establishing NRVs-R for persons aged 6 to 36 months, the FAO-WHO expert group that is updating the nutrient intake values for infants and young children will be tasked with reviewing and updating the definition for adequate intake (along with other relevant terms) as needed. This definition will be available for use by the EWG and CCNFSDU once the guidance for calcium, vitamin D and zinc has been finalized, which is estimated for no later than September 2023.
57. CCNFSDU43 agreed to rename the title “Definitions” to “Definitions as used in these Principles” and to delete “as used in these Principles” elsewhere in section 2.
58. CCNFSDU43 also agreed to put the definition for the Adequate Intake (AI) in square brackets until the WHO report on the first set of intake values for nutrients is published later in 2023.

b) Editorial re-arrangement of the definitions

59. The Committee endorsed the recommendation for the editorial change to move the definition of Adequate Intake (AI) (currently in square brackets) before the definition for Upper Level of Intake (UL).

Recommendation 4 – 3.1 Selection of suitable data sources to establish NRVs-R

60. The PWG Chairperson explained that there had been broad support both within the EWG and PWG for FAO/WHO being the primary source of the daily intake reference values required for establishing NRVs; and that the proposed text in section 3.1 was aligned with the *Guidelines on Nutrition Labelling (CXG 2-1985)*, Annex 1: General Principles for establishing Nutrient Reference Values for the General Population.
61. CCNFSDU43 endorsed the recommendation.

⁷ https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/43412/9241594012_eng.pdf

Recommendation 5 – 3.2 Appropriate basis for establishing NRVs-R

62. CCNFSDU43 considered the proposed draft text and agreed to:
- i. retain the reference to Individual Nutrient Level 98 (INL98) adding the word 'Ideally' at the beginning of the sentence; and
 - ii. to delete the reference "(2021 FAO report)",
- and with these changes, endorsed the recommendation.

Recommendation 6 – NRVs-R for the 6-36 months age group

63. The PWG Chairperson informed the Committee that the EWG had recognised that there were many foods on the market covering the entire age range of 6-36 months and that it was timely to consider approaches for establishing NRVs-R for the entire age group. She explained that it would be feasible to select the higher value of the proposed NRVs-R for older infants and young children for the combined age range if it did not exceed the UL for older infants and young children, where available. Such an approach would be developed and piloted as the stepwise process was being developed as outlined in CRD08.
64. It was also proposed to explore the possibility of including the selection of the lower value or of the mean value of the two age groups when developing the NRVs-R for the combined age group of 6-36 months.
65. CCNFSDU43 agreed to insert the following text in square brackets under section 3.2 to consider the combined NRVs-R values for persons aged 6-36 months:

[The combined NRV-R value for persons aged 6-36 months should be determined by selecting the higher value of the proposed NRVs-R for older infants and young children if it does not exceed the UL for older infants and/or young children, where available.

OR

The combined NRV-R value for persons aged 6-36 months should be determined by selecting the lower value of the proposed NRVs-R for older infants and young children.

OR

The combined NRV-R value for persons aged 6-36 months should be determined by calculating the mean value of the two age groups 6-12 months and 12-36 months.]

Recommendation 7 – 3.3 Upper levels of Intake

66. CCNFSDU43 endorsed the recommendation noting that the proposed text of Section 3.3 is in line with the corresponding section in CXG 2-1985, Annex I.

Recommendation 8 – Revision to the Stepwise process

67. CCNFSDU43 endorsed the recommendation to revise the proposed draft Stepwise Process considering the changes made to the text of the proposed draft General Principles.
68. The Chairperson of the PWG highlighted that the Stepwise Process could be contained in a standalone document and would not be included in the draft General Principles to ensure these were overarching and had the flexibility to ensure future use.

Conclusion

69. CCNFSDU43 agreed to:
- i. Forward the proposed draft General Principles for establishing Nutrient Reference Values (NRVs-R) for persons aged 6 to 36 months to CAC46 for adoption at Step 5 (Appendix III); and
 - ii. Re-establish the EWG open to all members and observers, chaired by Ireland, and co-chaired by Costa Rica and the United States of America, working in English and Spanish to:
 - a. Revise the draft Stepwise Process taking into account the revisions to the draft General Principles and to develop an approach to propose NRVs-R for the combined age range of 6-36 months
 - b. Apply the revised draft Stepwise Process to propose NRVs-R for persons aged 6-12 months, 12-36 months and 6-36 months for the following nutrients:

- vitamins A, D, C, K and E, thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, vitamins B6 and B12, folate, pantothenic acid and biotin
- calcium, magnesium, iron, zinc, iodine, copper, selenium, manganese, phosphorus and potassium.

70. The possibility of holding a PWG prior to the next session of the Committee was kept open.

TECHNOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATION FOR SEVERAL FOOD ADDITIVES (Agenda Item 6)⁸

71. The Chairperson recalled that at CCNFSDU41, the "CCNFSDU framework for appraising the technological need for food additives" (hereafter referred to as the Framework) had been completed. Additionally, the appraisal of the technological need for xanthan gum (INS 415) and pectins (INS 440) had been carried out, and it was decided to continue with the appraisal of low-acyl clarified gellan gum (INS 418) and three other food additives, including a group food additive, in CCFA49/CRD15Rev. The Chairperson informed the participants that (i) the Framework had been published on the Codex website as an information document, and (ii) CL 2022/80/OCL-NFSDU had been circulated to collect comments from Members and Observers, as the EWG had not completed its work.

72. The European Union, Chairperson of the in-session WG, explained that CCFA49/CRD15Rev provided an overview of food additives permitted for use in infant formula or formulas for special medical purposes intended for infants; noting that several food additives had no adequate risk assessment by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) for infants under the age of 12 weeks. The Chairperson further emphasized that the in-session WG had made recommendations for the four food additives as well as the Plan/Programme for the remaining food additives.

73. CCNFSDU43 considered the recommendations (as outlined in CRD40), took decisions and made comments as follows:

Recommendation 1: low acyl clarified gellan gum (INS 418)

74. In response to a question on the necessity of using low-acyl clarified gellan gum (INS 418), it was explained that this food additive was used in liquid formulas for special medical purposes that were based on hydrolysed protein and/or amino acids (e.g., for infants with milk allergy) and the reason for using this additive was to efficiently maintain the homogeneity of these products.

75. CCNFSDU43 agreed:

- i. that the proposed use of low-acyl clarified gellan gum (INS 418) as a thickener and stabilizer in formulas for special medical purposes intended for infants at 5 mg/100 mL limited to hydrolysed protein and/or amino acid-based liquid formula was technologically justified; and
- ii. to request that CCFA consider including the food additive in the GSFA food category 13.1.3 "Formulae for special medical purposes for infants" once the specifications for the food additive had been assigned as "full", noting the on-going CCFA work on alignment of the food additive provisions in CXS 72-1981 with the GSFA as well as the "tentative" specification status for this food additive.

Recommendations 2 and 3: Ascorbyl palmitate (INS 304) and tocopherol concentrate, mixed (INS 307b)

76. The in-session WG Chairperson explained that: (i) for ascorbyl palmitate the proposal to change the maximum use level to GMP had not been agreed on since this additive had a numerical ADI and such change would not be in line with the principle for the use of additives in foods intended for infants and young children; and (ii) the reference to "singly or in combination" for ascorbyl palmitate (INS 304) and tocopherol concentrate, mixed (INS 307b) was irrelevant and therefore should be deleted.

77. CCNFSDU43 agreed that:

- i. the use of ascorbyl palmitate (INS 304) as an antioxidant at 1 mg/100 mL in all types of formula covered by CXS 72-1981 was technologically justified; and
- ii. the use of tocopherol concentrate, mixed (INS 307b) as an antioxidant at 1 mg/100 mL in all types of infant formula covered by CXS 72-1981 was technologically justified.

⁸ CX/NFSDU 23/43/6; CRD13 (Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of Korea, Rwanda, and South Africa); CRD19 (Indonesia); CRD20 (Kenya); CRD21 (Syrian Arab Republic); CRD23 (African Union); CRD24 (IBFAN); CRD25 (Senegal); CRD27(Panama); CRD30 (Thailand); CRD31 (Russian Federation); CRD40 (Report of the in-session WG on the technological justification for several food additives)

Recommendation 4: Phosphates (INS 339(i), 339(ii) and 339(iii) and INS 340(i), 340(ii) and 340(iii))

78. An Observer pointed out that according to available epidemiological studies, there was a link between sodium intake and chronic diseases. As a result, allowing food additives containing sodium to be used in infant formula would be inappropriate.
79. CCNFSDU43 agreed that the use of phosphates (INS 339(i), 339(ii) and 339(iii) and INS 340(i), 340(ii) and 340(iii)) as acidity regulators at 45 mg/100 mL as phosphorus singly or in combination and within the limits for sodium, potassium and phosphorus in section 3.1.3 (e) of CXS 72-1981 in all types of formula was technologically justified.

Recommendation 5: Plan/programme for the consideration of the remaining food additives in CCFA49/CRD15Rev

80. CCNFSDU43 agreed with the recommendation to establish an EWG to continue the work related to batch 2, as listed in CL 2022/80/OCL-NFSDU Annex 2.

Others

81. Some delegations reaffirmed the JECFA principle that "Baby foods should be prepared without food additives whenever possible" and expressed their view that food additives in infant formula should be reduced.
82. CCNFSDU43 noted that the following editorial corrections to CL 2022/80/OCL-NFSDU Annex 2, including:
- in batch 3, "L(+) lactic acid" should be replaced with "lactic acid, L-, D-, and DL- (INS 270) (only L(+)-form of lactic acid is permitted for use in products in compliance with CXS 72-1981)"; citric acid and citrates (INS 330, 331, 331iii, 332, 332ii) should be revised as citric acid and citrates (INS 330, 331(i), 331(iii), 332(i), 332(ii)); and
 - in batch 4, carbonates (INS 500, 501) should be revised as carbonates (INS 500(i), 500(ii), 501(i), 501(ii)).

Conclusion

83. CCNFSDU43 agreed to:
- i. inform CCFA of the aforementioned decisions regarding the technological justifications for the four food additives and request that CCFA include them in the priority list of substances proposed for evaluation by JECFA;
 - ii. establish an EWG, chaired by the European Union, working in English with the following terms of reference:
 - a. to collect information from the applicants on the use and use levels and confirmation to provide data on the safety assessment for infants below 12 weeks of age on the following additives: guar gum (INS 412), distarch phosphate (INS 1412), phosphated distarch phosphate (INS 1413), acetylated distarch phosphate (INS 1414), hydroxypropyl starch (INS 1440); and
 - b. to collect information from the applicants with the framework for considering technological justification for use in CXS 72-1981 on food additives for which the use, use levels and commitment to provide the data is confirmed; and
 - c. to review the information provided and provide recommendation to CCNFSDU44 on the technological justification of each additive.

PRIORITIZATION MECHANISM / EMERGING ISSUES OR NEW WORK PROPOSALS (Agenda item 7)⁹

84. The Chairperson recalled that the work on a prioritization mechanism had begun following a request from CCEXEC75 (2018).
85. At CCNFSDU41, the German Host Secretariat had proposed a draft guideline for the preliminary assessment and identification of work priorities for CCNFSDU (Rep.20/NFSDU_Rev Appendix IX) including a process and criteria

⁹ CX/NFSDU 23/43/7, CX/NFSDU 23/43/8; CRD6 (Report of the PWG), CRD7 (Switzerland), CRD9 (Argentina and Malaysia), CRD14 (European Union, Malaysia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Republic of Korea, Vietnam, EUVEPRO, ENSA and IMACE, Fediol, Helen Keller International, IDF, IMACE, IPA, ISO); CRD19 (Indonesia); CRD20 (Kenya); CRD22 (Dominican Republic and Malaysia); CRD23 (African Union); CRD25 (Senegal); CRD26 (PWG on the prioritization mechanism, emerging issues: proposed addition to criteria); CRD27 (Panama); CRD28 (Paraguay); CRD29 (Mexico); CRD30 (Thailand); CRD31 (Russian Federation); CRD33 (Good Food Institute); CRD34 (Ghana); CRD35 (Costa Rica); CRD37 (WHO); CRD39 (Argentina and Malaysia)

for prioritizing the work of CCNFSDU. CCNFSDU41 had agreed to implement these on a pilot basis to assess their usefulness. CCNFSDU41 had also agreed to set up a PWG chaired by Germany and co-chaired by Canada to meet prior to CCNFSDU42 to review all new work proposals and to simplify the draft guideline.

86. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CCNFSDU42 took place virtually in 2021 with an abridged agenda. The review of new work proposals was postponed to CCNFSDU43 while in the interim work on the prioritization mechanism continued in an EWG chaired by Germany and co-chaired by Canada. The results of this working group were published in CX/NFSDU 23/43/8.
87. A Circular Letter (CL 2020/30-NFSDU) had been issued requesting proposals for new work. The Chairperson confirmed that all new work proposals received in reply to this CL had been kept for consideration by CCNFSDU43. Six new work proposals had been submitted in response to the CL and were published in CX/NFSDU 23/43/7.
88. The PWG that had met prior to CCNFSDU43 had reviewed all new work proposals using the revised prioritization mechanism on a pilot basis and had also reviewed the mechanism itself.

Draft guideline and prioritization mechanism

89. The Chairperson of the PWG described the aim of the guideline to pre filter proposals for new work and ensure that only proposals which fulfil all procedural requirements would be forwarded to the Committee.
90. The Chairperson of the Committee proposed to discuss the different sections of the draft guideline: the process for considering and prioritizing proposals for new work; the decision tree for the preliminary assessment of new work proposals, and the criteria for the prioritization of new work proposals.

Process for considering and prioritizing proposals for new work

91. The Committee agreed to the stepwise process for submitting new work proposals outlined under points 7-16 in the draft guideline (CX/NFSDU 23/43/8, Appendix I).

Decision tree

92. The Committee agreed that the decision tree required further development after the revision of the prioritization criteria. The Chairperson clarified that the wording in step 1 should be revised as to the fact that proposals by observers needed a member leading the work, ideally endorsing an observer proposal and submitting it in reply to the CL.

Prioritization criteria

93. A number of comments/ questions were raised during the consideration of the draft criteria:
- Should the word “positive” before “impact” in the self-assessment criteria be maintained or deleted; should possible negative impacts also be captured?
 - Should further criteria be added e.g. “impact on consumer interests”, “impact on the One Health Approach”? Should “global impact” be deleted or clarified as to create a common understanding?
 - More guidance was needed on how to apply, interpret, limit or widen the Scale-System (high, medium, low), and/or the colours used in the decision tree.
 - Is a self-assessment the most appropriate way for evaluating proposals or would it be more useful to ask the submitter to provide more information on the criteria and let the PWG carry out the assessment?
 - An additional step in the process could determine whether there is a need to prioritize proposals e.g. when an insufficient number of acceptable new work proposals have been submitted to warrant prioritization, also considering the overall workload of the Committee.
 - More guidance to submitters was needed on how to be clear about the scope of their proposals.

Conclusion

94. The Committee agreed to establish an EWG open to all Members and Observers, chaired by Canada and co-chaired by Germany, working in English and French with the following terms of reference:
- i. Revise the draft guideline for the preliminary assessment to identify and prioritize new work for CCNFSDU, including prioritization criteria and the decision tree, taking into account the comments that were made in the PWG held prior to CCNFSDU43 and the comments and decisions made at CCNFSDU43.
 - ii. Prepare a revised draft guideline for use on a trial basis for consideration by CCNFSDU44.
95. CCNFSDU43 also agreed to keep open the possibility to hold a PWG prior to CCNFSDU44.

Proposals for Amendments

Proposal 1.1: Proposed amendment/revision: *Standard for Canned Baby Foods (CXS 73-1981)* (submitted by the Dominican Republic)

96. The Representative of WHO noted the scientific literature has documented an increased risk of methaemoglobinaemia related to high nitrate intake among infants and young children. However, the risk appears to be rather low and linked primarily to consumption of contaminated well water. Consumption of root vegetables and other green leafy vegetables have also been linked to high nitrate intake when these are grown in soil with high nitrate content. However, the risk of methaemoglobinaemia is likely limited to infants who consume very large quantities of such vegetables. Several authors have suggested that the overall health and nutritional benefits of vegetables would outweigh the potential risk of methaemoglobinaemia except in very specific circumstances.
97. The Representative further noted that while the sentence in CXS 73-1981 paragraph 9.5.2 refers only to canned beetroot and spinach, other root vegetables (e.g. carrots) and other green leafy vegetables (e.g. chard, kale) may also contain high nitrate levels when the soil in which these were grown is contaminated. The risk of methaemoglobinaemia declines with age, but there does not appear to be a specific cutoff age at which the risk is particularly high. There is little justification for a cutoff of either 12 weeks (as currently specified in CXS 73-1981) or 12 months (as suggested in the proposed amendment). As such, in the view of WHO. the current statement in 9.5.2 is not adequately evidence-based and should be deleted.
98. CCNFSDU43 agreed to the recommendation of the PWG to delete paragraph 9.5.2 from Standard CXS 73-1981 and submit the amendment directly to CAC46 for adoption (Appendix IV).

Proposal 1.2: Proposal to align the permitted uses of the folic acid source Calcium-L-Methyl-Folate with those of N-Pteroyl-L-Glutamic acid in the advisory list of nutrient compounds for use in foods for special dietary uses intended for infants and young children (CXG 10-1979)(submitted by Switzerland)

99. CCNFSDU43 agreed to the recommendation of the PWG to revise the *Advisory List of nutrient compounds* in CXG 10-1979, part B, row 10.2 Calcium-L-Methyl-Folate by adding four additional checkmarks in the columns Sec. A of IF, FUF, PCBF and CBF as well as adding the reference USP to the column International and/or national bodies and submit the revision directly to CAC46 for adoption (Appendix V).

Proposals for new work

100. The Chairperson recalled that the reason for introducing a draft guideline for the preliminary assessment to identify and prioritize new work proposals was to screen proposals both for their completeness and for their precision regarding the scope and expected result of the new work.

Proposal 2.1: Harmonized probiotic guidelines for use in foods and food supplements (submitted by Argentina and Malaysia)

101. Argentina and Malaysia introduced the proposal and provided a response to concerns raised in the PWG (see CRD39).

Discussion

102. Delegations in favour of the new work proposal expressed the following views:
- The topic was of considerable relevance and tackled current challenges.
 - Although the work may be challenging, this was not a reason to not proceed.
 - Probiotic substances are in use as food ingredients in many countries and guidance was required.
 - It would be appropriate to consider developing a harmonized guideline for the age group above two years.
 - A Codex text would help ensure consumers have access to safe and effective probiotics, facilitate trade, and ensure that consumers are protected from unsafe and fraudulent probiotic products.
 - Harmonized probiotic guidelines for use in food and food supplements were necessary to ensure the quality of probiotic products on a global scale.
 - Guidance would regulate the proliferation of probiotic use in conventional foods and as food supplements.
103. Delegations not in favour of proceeding with the new work expressed the following views:
- Probiotics represented a health rather than a food safety concern.
 - The term “probiotics” constituted a health claim since it was defined as live microorganisms which confer beneficial effects on health.
 - There were concerns on how the products were labelled and what kind of claims were being made for products for infants and young children.
 - Infant foods and foods for young children should be excluded from the scope.

- The scope of the work, including considerations of a scientific or microbiological nature were beyond the mandate and resources of CCNFSDU.
- The scope would need to be clarified regarding definition, minimum safety requirements and labelling parameters.
- The work could go to CCFH or CCFL if the proposal were refined.
- If the work is to support countries who do not have the resources to evaluate probiotics and rule out microbial microorganisms that are not probiotics, would the work of CCNFSDU include the evaluation of individual strains and how would this work be kept updated?

Conclusion

104. CCNFSDU43 agreed to establish an EWG open to all Members and Observers chaired by Argentina and co-chaired by China and Malaysia, working in English and Spanish, with the following terms of reference:
- i. Further refine and clarify Proposal 2.1 Discussion Paper on Harmonized Probiotic Guidelines for Use in Foods and Food Supplements in document CX/NFSDU 23/43/7, especially with regards to the scope, impact on food safety and need for scientific advice; and
 - ii. Develop a revised discussion paper and project document, taking into account comments at CCNFSDU43 and with the aim to consider it at CCNFSDU44 as part of the discussions of new work proposals.

Proposal 2.2: Guidelines including General Principles for the Nutritional Composition of Foods and Beverages made from Plant-based and other Alternative Protein Sources (submitted by Canada and the United States of America)

105. The United States of America presented the proposal and outlined how a Codex text could give general guidance on what nutrients replacement foods (such as plant or other alternative protein sources) might need to contain to assure that when consumers replace animal-based variants with an alternate protein-based variant, nutrient adequacy would not be compromised. They asked for input from the Committee on aspects of this scope and stated that for fully developing/refining the scope of this work scientific advice from FAO and WHO would be helpful.
106. The Representative of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) clarified that their own work on this topic sought to identify what could be defined as plant-based food and what type of ingredients could be used. They further clarified that the nutritional composition of such products was currently out of their scope. They informed that the draft ISO standard would be available at the end of 2023 and expected to be finalized in 2024.
107. One Member Organization recommended limiting the scope, where essential nutrients, adequacy or equivalency were required, to voluntary initiatives. As there were different attitudes in the world with regards to adding nutrients to foods any guidance on mandatory addition of nutrients might be difficult to accept on worldwide.
108. It was proposed that the Codex *General Principles for the Addition of Essential Nutrients to Foods* (CXG 9-1987) could be amended to address the concerns mentioned by the proponents of the new work.
109. Other delegations expressed concern regarding the ultra-processed nature of plant-based and other alternative protein sources.

Conclusion

110. CCNFSDU43 agreed that Canada and the United States of America would refine the scope of the new work proposal.

Proposal 2.3: General Guidelines to establish nutrient profiles for front-of-pack nutrition labelling (FOPNL)(submitted by Costa Rica, the European Union, Paraguay and the United States of America)

Conclusion

111. CCNFSDU43 agreed that due to ongoing work in this area by WHO and the lack of support in the PWG, the proposal should not be pursued at this time.

Proposal 2.4: Nutrient reference value (NRV-NCD) for trans-fatty acids (submitted by IMACE)

Conclusion

112. CCNFSDU43 agreed to not take up the new proposal in the absence of Member support.

Review of all CCNFSDU standards

113. The Chairperson recalled that the EWG had recommended the Committee consider conducting a review of its standards to ensure they remain relevant, consistent with other Codex texts and up to date. Following such a general review each revision proposed would need to be considered as new work and follow the draft guideline for the preliminary assessment to identify and prioritize new work for CCNFSDU.
114. The Codex Secretary proposed that the Codex Secretariat could initiate such a process in collaboration with FAO and WHO and calling upon advice from Members as needed and report back to CCNFSDU44.

Conclusion

115. CCNFSDU43 agreed that the Codex Secretariat would consider approaches to review all texts under the purview of CCNFSDU to assess if they were still fit for purpose and noted the willingness of FAO and WHO to assist in this task.

OTHER BUSINESS AND FUTURE WORK (Agenda Item 8)¹⁰

a) Methods of analysis¹¹

116. The Chairperson of the In-session Working Group (United States of America) highlighted the three recommendations as contained in its report (CRD41).
117. CCNFSDU43 considered the recommendations and took the following decisions:

Methods of analysis for the provisions in the *Standard for Infant Formula and Formulas for Special Medical Purposes Intended for Infants (CXS 72-1981)*

Recommendation 1 – Vitamin B12, Total Amino Acids and Tryptophan

118. One Member Organization clarified that the testing methods for total amino acids (excluding taurine and tryptophan) and tryptophan should be used for assessing compliance with Section 3.1.3a, footnotes 3 and 4 of CXS 72-1981 and not with “Section 3.2 Optional ingredients”, and these requirements should be clearly stated in the *Recommended Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CXS 234-1999)*.
119. CCNFSDU43 agreed to forward the methods of analysis for vitamin B12; total amino acids (excluding taurine and tryptophan), and tryptophan to CCMAS for endorsement and inclusion in CXS 234-1999.
120. CCNFSDU43 also agreed that a note should be inserted in CXS 234-1999 to clarify that the provisions are methods for testing total amino acids (excluding taurine and tryptophan) and tryptophan, i.e., for use according to Section 3.1.3a footnotes 3 and 4 of CXS 72-1981 (see Appendix VI).

Recommendation 2 – Fructans, beta-carotene and lycopene

121. CCNFSDU43 endorsed the recommendation and agreed to establish an EWG, chaired by the United States of America, open to all Members and Observers, and working in English, with the following terms of reference:
- i. to review the use of fructans, beta-carotene, lycopene in the context of optional ingredients in CXS 72-1981;
 - ii. to develop recommendations to CCNFSDU44 regarding the safety and suitability of these ingredients as optional ingredients in CXS 72-1981; and
 - iii. to submit a report for discussion at CCNFSDU44.

Methods of analysis for the provisions in the *Standard for Follow-up formula (CXS 156-1987)*

Recommendation 3 – Assessing the sweetness of carbohydrate sources

122. CCNFSDU43 noted support for the recommendation along with the following views:
- The EWG should collect scientifically available methods for use in sensory evaluation in the target age group (i.e., 12-36 months).
 - The preferred methods would be those based on comparison with lactose.
 - The ratio between lactose and glucose polymers in terms of how sweetness will be measured could be explored.

¹⁰ REP22/NFSDU, paras 6(ii); CRD15 (CCC)

¹¹ CRD4 (ISDI); CRD16 (EU, Switzerland, AOAC International, IDF and ISO); CRD20 (Kenya); CRD27 (Panama); CRD30 (Thailand); CRD36 (USA); CRD41 (Report of the in-session WG on methods of analysis)

- The impact of flavourings on sweetness might also need consideration.
123. CCNFSDU43 endorsed the recommendation and agreed to establish an EWG, chaired by the EU and co-chaired by Switzerland, open to all Members and Observers, working in English, with the following terms of reference:
- i. To review, identify and, if appropriate, recommend methods for referral to CCMAS for endorsement, in particular ISO 5495, for assessing the sweetness of carbohydrate sources in comparison to lactose in “Product for Young Children” in line with the draft revised CXS 156-1987, Section B, point 3.1.3c footnote 6 for those products based on non-milk protein.
 - ii. The approach described in CRD16 by the EU and Switzerland should be taken as a starting point.
 - iii. To submit a report for discussion at CCNFSDU44.

DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT SESSION (Agenda Item 9)

124. CCNFSDU43 was informed that its 44th Session was tentatively scheduled to take place within the next 18 months, the final arrangements being subject to confirmation by the Host Country in consultation with the Codex Secretariat.