

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



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Agenda Item 3

CX/GP 04/21/3

**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

Twenty-first (Extraordinary) Session

Paris, France, 8 - 13 November 2004

**PROCESSES FOR STANDARDS MANAGEMENT (INCLUDING THE CRITICAL
REVIEW) – REVISION OF THE CRITERIA FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF WORK
PRIORITIES**

(Prepared by the French Secretariat)

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Decisions agreed upon at the 25th & 26th Sessions of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (2003)

Proposal	24.2
Codex Document	ALINORM 03/26/11 - Add. 4
Background	<p>15. The Commission¹ reasserted that the first priority in the development of Codex standards was the protection of consumers' health and food safety and noted that the other priorities would require further discussion in the future.</p> <p>16. Several delegations supported Codex work on standards intended to ensure fair trade practices, with the understanding that only essential quality factors regulated by governments should be addressed in Codex standards while commercial quality should be left to trading partners. Several delegations and some observers stressed the importance of Codex work to ensure consumer information and choice. Other delegations expressed the view that this should not be considered in the priorities.</p> <p>STATEMENT :</p> <p>5. Noting the Evaluation's recommendations concerning the Commission's mandate, the Commission was of the opinion that its existing mandate to protect consumers' health and to ensure fair practices in the food trade continued to be appropriate but might be discussed in the future. Within this mandate, the Commission emphasised that its first priority would be the development of standards having an impact on consumer health and safety.</p>

Proposal	24.2
Codex Document	ALINORM 03/26/11 - Add. 4
Background	<p><i>To work within the priorities determined by the Strategic Framework and the Medium-Term Plan. Such a decision should not prejudice the possibility of taking the matter up at a future date.</i></p> <p>170. The Commission² decided that the current Codex Mandate as expressed in Article 1 of the Statutes of the Commission, should be retained but that it might be discussed in the future.</p>

¹ At its 25th session – see ALINORM 03/25/5

² At its 26th session – see ALINORM 03/41

Proposal	38.1
Codex Document	ALINORM 03/26/11 - Add. 4
Background	<i>Revision of the Criteria for the establishment of work priorities - The revised criteria should provide explicit judgement tools for assessing work proposals against priorities</i> 182. The Commission requested the Committee on General Principles to redraft the <i>Criteria for Work Priorities</i> to reflect the current priorities of the Commission and in a manner that would provide explicit judgement tools for assessing work proposals against priorities.

Status of the proposal after the discussion held at the 19th Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (November 2003)

The outcome of the discussion is recorded in ALINORM 04/27/33 (para. 46 – 54):

Introduction:

47) As regards the introductory paragraphs, the Committee noted that the reference to the strategic plan and the relevant outcomes of the critical review conducted by the Executive Committee was included and agreed with the text as proposed.

General criterion

51) After an extensive exchange of views, the Committee decided to keep these elements in a single sentence and agreed with the following text as “General Criterion”: “Consumer protection from the point of view of health, food safety, ensuring fair practices in the food trade and taking into account the identified needs of developing countries.”

Criteria applicable to general subject and Criteria applicable to commodities

54) The Committee did not conclude the discussion on these sections of the text. The criteria will be considered at the next (extraordinary) session.

Recommendation to the 21st session of the Codex Committee on General Principles

Draft Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities

The Committee is invited to resume its discussion on the proposal. The portion of the text in square brackets, which reflects the current wording of the criteria, has not been considered in depth at the 19th session of the CCGP.

DRAFT CRITERIA FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF WORK PRIORITIES

When a Codex Committee proposes to elaborate a standard, code of practice or related text within its terms of reference, it should first consider the priorities established by the Commission in the **strategic plan, the relevant outcomes of the critical review conducted by the Executive Committee**, and the prospect of completing the work within a reasonable period of time. It should also assess the proposal against the criteria set out below.

If the proposal falls in an area outside the Committee's terms of reference the proposal should be reported to the Commission in writing together with proposals for such amendments to the Committee's terms of reference as may be required.

CRITERIA

General criterion :

~~Consumer protection from the point of view of health and food safety, and from that of fraudulent practices, taking into account the identified needs of developing countries.~~ **Consumer protection from the point of view of health, food safety, ensuring fair practices in the food trade and taking into account the identified needs of developing countries.**

[Criteria applicable to general subjects

- (a) Diversification of national legislations and apparent resultant or potential impediments to international trade.
- (b) Scope of work and establishment of priorities between the various sections of the work.
- (c) Work already undertaken by other international organizations in this field.

Criteria applicable to commodities

- (a) Volume of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of trade between countries.
- (b) Diversification of national legislations and apparent resultant or potential impediments to international trade.
- (c) International or regional market potential.
- (d) Amenability of the commodity to standardisation.
- (e) Coverage of the main consumer protection and trade issues by existing or proposed general standards.
- (f) Number of commodities which would need separate standards indicating whether raw, semi processed or processed.
- (g) Work already undertaken by other international organizations in this field.]