



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES
Twenty-seventh Session
Paris, France, 2 – 6 April 2012

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE
Comments received in reply to CL 2010/22-GP

1. Background

CCGP25 had proposed to the Commission to delete the second sentence of its terms of reference as it referred to the acceptance procedure and referred to previous activities but did not describe its current responsibilities. The Commission did not adopt the amendment as there was no consensus on the deletion of some provisions, and requested the CCGP to review its terms of reference.

At CCGP26¹ the Committee reviewed a proposal by the Secretariat in CL 2009/37-GP but did not reach a conclusion and agreed with the proposal of the Chairperson to circulate the revised terms of reference, as amended at the session, with the paragraph on economic impact in square brackets for comments (also reproduced in 2. below) and further consideration at CCGP27 where economic impact would also be discussed on the basis of the outcome of an electronic working group (see agenda item 4).

2. Proposed draft amendment to the terms of reference of the Codex Committee on General Principles

Amend the terms of reference of the Committee as follows:

“To deal with such procedural and general matters as are referred to it by the Codex Alimentarius Commission or one of its subsidiary bodies and the Executive Committee.

To review and endorse procedural provisions/ texts intended for inclusion in the Procedural Manual forwarded by subsidiary bodies.

To propose amendments to the Procedural Manual of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

~~Such matters have included the establishment of the General Principles which define the purpose and scope of the Codex Alimentarius, the nature of Codex standards and the forms of acceptance by countries of Codex standards; the development of Guidelines for Codex Committees;~~

~~[To the development of a mechanism for examining any economic impact statements submitted by governments concerning possible implications for their economies of some of the individual standards or some of the provisions thereof.]~~

~~the establishment of a Code of Ethics for the International Trade in Food.”~~

¹ ALINORM 10/33/33, paras 64 – 73 and Appendix IV.

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European Union

The Member States of the European Union (MSEU) support the revised terms of reference for the Codex Committee on General Principles as proposed in Appendix IV of ALINORM 10/33/33.

The MSEU would like to reiterate their position that the proposed terms of reference are of a general nature and allow the Committee to consider any procedural matter. Therefore, the MSEU suggest deleting the square bracketed paragraph concerning economic impact statements as there is no need to refer to such specific items of work in the terms of reference. The MSEU take note that the issue of economic impact statements is being discussed in an electronic Working Group and will be further considered at the next session of CCGP.

Japan

Japan, while agreeing with the proposed insertion and deletion made and agreed by the 26th CCGP, does not support the addition of the square bracketed text in fifth paragraph.

As pointed out at the 26th CCGP, the revised terms of reference is of a general nature and allows the Committee to consider any procedural matter, including the issue on economic impact statement, as undertaken by the ongoing electronic working group led by Brazil and Malaysia. There is no need to refer to any specific matter of work in the TOR by adding the square bracketed text.

Malaysia

While we note that the provisions concerning the consideration of economic implications are already included at Steps 3, 5, 6 and 8 of the Elaboration Procedure, Malaysia strongly believes that further guidance on how and to what extent economic impact statements are considered in the deliberation of a proposed draft standard would be beneficial to members.

Malaysia sees merit in CCGP setting forth a mechanism for examining economic impact statements as this would ensure a uniformed procedure be applied across different Codex Committees other than ensuring transparency in consideration of possible economic implications of a standard to Codex members.

In this regard, Malaysia would like to have the square brackets be removed from the paragraph on economic impact.

~~–To develop a mechanism for examining any economic impact statements submitted by governments concerning possible implications for their economies of some of the individual standards or some of the provisions thereof.–~~