

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



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United Nations

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World Health
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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Forty-seventh Session

Geneva, Switzerland, CICG, 25 – 30 November 2024

**REPORT OF THE EIGHTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION**

Geneva, Switzerland, CICG, 18-22 November 2024

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission held its Eighty-seventh Session (CCEXEC87) at the Centre International de Conférences Genève (CICG), Geneva, Switzerland, from 18 to 22 November 2024.
2. The Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), Mr Steve Wearne (United Kingdom), opened the meeting. The Director, Department of Nutrition and Food Safety of the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr Francesco Branca, and the Chief Economist of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Dr Máximo Torero Cullen, welcomed the participants on behalf of the two Organizations. The Director of the FAO Liaison Office of Geneva (FAOLOG), Dominique Burgeon, and the Codex Secretary, Sarah Cahill, also greeted the participants.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda item 1)¹

3. CCEXEC87 adopted the agenda with the following modifications and additions.
4. Regarding Agenda item 2, Critical Review, Part III, CCEXEC87 acknowledged that the subitem on the labelling provisions for the Standard for dried floral parts – dried saffron was a matter referred to CCEXEC and CAC by the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL). CCEXEC87 therefore agreed to discuss it following the completion of the Critical Review.

CRITICAL REVIEW (Agenda item 2)²

5. The Codex Secretariat reminded CCEXEC87 of the purpose of the Critical Review as described in the Codex Procedural Manual.
6. CCEXEC87 noted that all new work proposals would be addressed together under Agenda item 2.4. Members discussed the items for consideration committee by committee and made the following comments and recommendations.

Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR)³

Final adoption

7. CCEXEC87 recommended that CAC47 adopt the:
 - Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for different combinations of pesticide/commodity(ies) at Step 5/8;
 - consequential amendments to the Codex MRLs (CXLs) for peppers group/subgroup: MRLs for okra; and
 - consequential amendment to the *Classification of Food and Feed* (CXA 4-1989) – Additional commodities for Class D – Processed Foods of Plant Origin.

Adoption at Step 5

8. CCEXEC87 recommended that CAC47 adopt at Step 5 the Guidelines for monitoring the stability and purity of reference materials and related stock solutions of pesticides during prolonged storage.

Revocation

9. CCEXEC87 recommended that CAC47 revoke the listed CXLs for different combinations of pesticide/commodity(ies).

Discontinuation

10. CCEXEC87 recommended that CAC47 discontinue work on the MRLs for different combinations of pesticide/commodity(ies) that were withdrawn (discontinued) from the Step Procedure.

Other issues

11. It was noted that issues concerning cooperation of work between CCPR and the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF) would be addressed under the critical review of CCRVDF (see paragraph 49).
12. CCEXEC87 noted ongoing work regarding enhancing the operational procedures of CCPR and Joint FAO/WHO Meeting on Pesticide Residues (JMPR), and registration of pesticides and unsupported compounds scheduled for periodic review without public health concerns.

¹ CX/EXEC 24/87/1

² CX/EXEC 24/87/2

³ CX/EXEC 24/87/2, Appendix 1

13. CCEXEC87:

- (i) encouraged the JMPR Secretariat and CCPR to work together through the EWG on the enhancement of operational procedures of JMPR and CCPR to explore avenues within the short- and long-term approaches to reduce the backlog of compounds for evaluation by JMPR to increase Codex MRLs for pesticides for international trade; and.
- (ii) emphasized the need for data submissions and data sharing to facilitate JMPR's periodic review of compounds without public health concerns.

Other considerations

Timely availability of FAO and WHO monographs

Timely availability and translation of Codex documents

Discussion

14. Members highlighted the following issues:

- The unavailability or late availability of FAO and/or WHO monographs was a concern as these were an important input for some Members in developing national or regional positions. This recurrent issue affected several Codex committees, which relied on JMPR or on the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) reports and monographs to advance standards in the step procedure efficiently;
- Late availability and translation of Codex documents were also recurrent issues that hindered Members' ability to effectively participate in Codex meetings, develop national positions, or make informed comments on a given matter;
- The abovementioned issues were part of a larger work management problem that should be addressed through the new Codex Strategic Plan to support timely publication and translation of Codex documents.

15. Regarding the timely availability of FAO and WHO monographs, the Representatives of FAO and WHO recognized that, at times, meeting reports might be issued with less time than desirable before the corresponding Codex committees' meetings. The associated monographs typically took much longer than reports to finalize due to: their content and length, often running to hundreds of pages; the reliance on the support of volunteer experts to complete them; and the internal clearance processes required before publication. Hence there were several challenges to expediting the publication. They emphasized their commitment to making summary reports available within 2-3 weeks of the conclusion of the expert meeting and the meeting reports in time for the Codex meeting. Noting that the scheduling of Codex meetings and meetings of expert committees was challenging to coordinate and also impacted the sequencing of publications, FAO and WHO confirmed ongoing close cooperation with the Codex Secretariat to improve the situation.

16. Members expressed appreciation for FAO and WHO's clarifications regarding the timeliness of document compilation and editing, including internal approval processes that may contribute to delays in publishing monographs. Members noted the need to balance the timeliness of decision-making with the need for transparency and inclusiveness in Codex and expert committee meetings processes while acknowledging the clarifications provided by FAO and WHO regarding resource and administrative constraints.

17. Members expressed the following views:

- Delays in publication of monographs (e.g., 12-18 months) raised concerns about transparency and equal access to data/information for all stakeholders before Codex committee meetings;
- Considering the need to balance speed and transparency, Codex committees may need to decide between (i) expeditious progress i.e., to proceed based on the conclusions of the expert meetings as contained in the meeting reports, even if the full monographs were unavailable, therefore prioritizing timely risk management decisions and advancing work or (ii) to delay considerations of proposed standards until the complete dossiers were published to ensure transparency and enable all stakeholders to review the detailed data, noting that this could result in delays of up to 2 years, impacting the pace of decision-making. Therefore, when considering timeliness vs. inclusiveness, the trade-off between expediting risk management decisions and ensuring all stakeholders have full access to scientific data had to be carefully weighed;

- Codex committees based their risk management decisions on the conclusions and recommendations of the scientific expert meeting reports. However, as monographs provide background information that supported conclusions and recommendations in scientific reports, it would be desirable that countries had access to the monographs before meetings to ensure informed decision-making;
- The Codex Secretariat should communicate the timescale for delivery of expert meeting reports and supporting materials, including monographs;
- While faster publication of monographs was desirable, various constraints hindered this in the short term. Long-term strategies, such as allocating additional resources or streamlining processes, could help reduce delays over time. FAO and WHO were encouraged to review and enhance their work management practices to expedite the publication process.

18. A Member questioned the usefulness and relevance of monographs published so long after the committee meetings. FAO and WHO Representatives emphasized that all publications originating from a scientific expert meeting serve the overarching goal of transparency; transparency as to what sources and data were being used, how these were considered, and what input, in general, has been used to derive a risk assessment was of critical importance and at the core of scientific methodology.
19. The Chairperson drew a distinction between the various relevant provisions in the *Working Principles for Risk Analysis applied by CAC*. The general aspects of the Working Principles emphasized the transparency and systematic documentation required of all components of the risk analysis framework but did not specify timelines. Separately, the provisions related to risk assessment and management required a report, such as the summary and report from the joint expert advisory bodies, which should indicate any constraints, uncertainties, assumptions, and their impact on risk assessment and a risk estimate, if available, in a readily understandable and useful form.
20. On the late availability and translation of Codex documents, the Codex Secretariat raised the following points:

- *Historical context and recurring challenges*: Document availability, translation, and publication timeliness was a long-standing issue, also raised by the Codex Secretariat in the past, suggesting a systemic issue that extended beyond superficial fixes;
- *Complex factors at play*: Challenges included time availability, expertise, budgetary constraints, drafting and clearance processes and the schedule of Codex meetings and related support;
- *Commitment to collaboration*: The Secretariat was committed to working with FAO and WHO to improve scheduling and other processes, noting that resolving these issues requires a holistic approach and not only additional resources or funding;
- *Workload and scheduling Issues*: The Commission's heavy workload, driven by Member needs and meetings, was a fundamental factor affecting efficiency. A re-evaluation of scheduling and work management practices could help address related challenges;

21. The Codex Secretariat suggested that CCEEXEC could consider discussing work management practices in depth at its next session.
22. The Chairperson reflected on the shared responsibility for work management amongst FAO, WHO, Codex Members, and the Codex Secretariat and the role of CCEEXEC to advise the Commission on work management issues such as meeting scheduling and resource allocation and identify practical solutions.

Conclusion

23. CCEEXEC87:
 - encouraged FAO and WHO to continue prioritizing timely publication efforts; and
 - agreed that the Codex Secretariat would allocate time at CCEEXEC88 (2025) to discuss the interlinked issues impacting work management, specifically focusing on the consequences for timeliness and translation of working documents.

Consideration of reservations as part of Critical Review

24. A Member reiterated a request made at CCEEXEC86 to include information about reservations expressed by Codex Members at Committee meetings as a standard practice for consideration as part of Critical review, emphasizing its value in helping anticipate potential issues at CAC.
25. Other Members supported this proposal noting that this inclusion would serve as a simple reference, such as a table or summary, without requiring the Codex Secretariat to make judgments or draw conclusions, which the Committees' Chairpersons could eventually provide. A factual approach was in their view non-contentious and would be beneficial in facilitating CCEEXEC's work on Critical Review.

26. The Codex Secretariat explained that reservations were thoroughly documented in the committee reports, which provide the full context, including the evolution of discussions, conclusions, and reasons for reservations. The Critical Review was not intended to duplicate the committees' reports but to complement them. As such, it served as a concise tool for assessing key elements of the committees' discussion in conjunction with the reports, providing the necessary depth and context, noting that Critical Review documents included hyperlinks to relevant committee reports. While tabulating reservations might seem efficient, it risked oversimplifying complex issues: reservations often arose for varied reasons, requiring context to interpret them accurately, which could lead to misinterpretation or loss of nuanced information. Adding such details to the Critical Review documents could make them excessively lengthy and less user-friendly. The Secretariat stressed the importance of maintaining the integrity and clarity of the information given in the critical review documents.

27. The Codex Secretariat further explained that the Critical Review process focused on procedure-related issues, as outlined in the Codex Procedural Manual, not on technical content or substantive concerns. Process-related reservations on issues such as the late availability or unavailability of JECFA or JMPR monographs that did not allow informed decisions by Codex Members could be reported on an ad hoc basis, as was the case for some MRLs for pesticides and veterinary drugs, thereby providing relevant insights to the Critical Review while ensuring it retains its focus. Technical reservations that involved disagreements over substantive matters were deemed the purview of the Commission for discussion and resolution. Therefore, including all reservations in the Critical Review risked overstepping its intended scope, potentially creating ambiguity between procedural and technical aspects.

28. While the Codex Secretariat encouraged CCEEXEC members to refer directly to the committees' reports for a comprehensive understanding of the issues on which reservations were being made, including the nature and implications of reservations, the Secretariat remained open to exploring how to balance the concerns expressed with the needs of CCEEXEC members, ensuring the Critical Review was concise and effective without undermining the purpose of committee reports.

29. Based on the explanation by the Codex Secretariat, the following views were expressed:

- Including all reservations in the critical review document would be impractical and unnecessary. Technical subsidiary bodies were the appropriate venue for discussing and addressing these reservations;
- Reservations were already clearly documented in committee reports and duplicating them in the Critical Review may lead to unnecessary complications. Including reservations would require significant context to ensure proper interpretation, potentially leading to much lengthier and less focused documents;
- Adherence to the scope of the Critical Review as outlined in the Codex Procedural Manual. Therefore, focusing on process-related issues was crucial for ensuring the Critical Review's efficiency and relevance.

Conclusion

30. CCEEXEC87 noted that improving and developing Critical Review processes was a standing item on the CCEEXEC agenda. A full record of this discussion would be maintained for future reference, allowing for continued exploration of balancing the efficiency, transparency, and usability of Critical Review documents.

Alignment of methodologies on dietary exposure assessment

31. A Member noted that dietary exposure methodology was a critical element of pesticide risk management, which also played a role in determining the level of risk and transitions into the domain of risk management. The Member called for consistency between JECFA and JMPR risk assessment methodologies to maintain a unified approach to risk assessment within Codex; moreover, alignment across these committees was critical to achieving consistent risk assessment outcomes regardless of the substance under review. The Member emphasized the importance of transparency and inclusiveness in discussions about methodology to build trust between risk assessors and risk managers, ensure broad participation, and encouraged the Codex Secretariat to prioritize these principles when facilitating future discussions in CCPR and enquired FAO and WHO about the feasibility and challenges of methodological alignment.

32. The Representative of WHO indicated that the issue of exposure assessment methodology was not new. Over a decade ago, the matter was examined through an expert meeting that included specialists from JECFA and JMPR, which recommended, a new approach, which JECFA successfully implemented several years ago in its risk assessment of veterinary drug residues in food. However, extending this approach to JMPR has faced challenges, as some experts have raised concerns about its applicability. While some JMPR experts viewed this new method as overly conservative, the JMPR exposure assessment experts unanimously supported its suitability. WHO was working within JMPR to build consensus and effectively communicate the merits of this

exposure calculation method. Clarification and proactive communication regarding this approach would be presented and pursued at CCPR56 (2025).

33. The Representative of FAO encouraged CCEEXEC to consider focusing on the process-oriented aspects of the issues of delays to scientific advice, and to request FAO and WHO to evaluate these events carefully and take appropriate actions to ensure that the delivery of scientific advice to CCPR was not at risk.

Conclusion

34. CCEEXEC87:

- i. highlighted the importance of FAO and WHO's provision of scientific advice for pesticides to Codex;
- ii. stressed the pivotal role of FAO and WHO in supporting the work of JMPR to provide the scientific basis for the establishment of MRLs for CCPR; and
- iii. encouraged FAO and WHO to facilitate the resolution by JMPR of its continuing discussions related to exposure assessment and to communicate its conclusions at the earliest opportunity, as requested by CCPR.

FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean (CCLAC)⁴

Final adoption

35. CCEEXEC87 noted that the requirements of the endorsement procedure had not yet been fulfilled with regard to the food additive provisions in the draft standard. CCEEXEC87 decided to put on hold any recommendation to CAC regarding adoption of the regional standard for Castilla Lulo (naranjilla) pending fulfilment of the endorsement requirements by the Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA) of the food additive provisions. (see also paragraph 96)

Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS)⁵

Adoption at Step 5

36. CCEEXEC87 recommended that CAC47 adopt at Step 5 the Guidelines on the prevention and control of food fraud.

Other issues

37. CCEEXEC87 encouraged CCFICS to make progress, with a view towards finalisation at CCFICS28, on the consolidated guidelines related to equivalence, and the revision and update of the *Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification System* (CXG 60-2006), which had been returned to Step 2/3 for further development.

Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU)⁶

Adoption

38. CCEEXEC87 recommended that CAC47 adopt the:

- General principles for the establishment of Nutrient Reference Values – Requirements (NRVs-R) for persons aged 6 – 36 months (Annex 1, Part B of CXG 2-1985), at Step 8;
- NRVs-R for persons aged 6-36 months: Vitamins A, B6, D and E, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, pantothenic acid, calcium, copper, iodine, potassium, zinc and protein, at Step 5/8;
- Amendments to the *Standard for infant formula and formulas for special medical purposes intended for infants* (CXS 72-1981); and
- Inclusion of the nitrogen to protein conversion factor for follow-up formula for older infants and products for young children in the Annex of CXS 234-1999 (as submitted by the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling).

Monitoring

39. CCEEXEC87 agreed to extend the timeline for completion of the work by CCNFSDU on NRVs-R for persons aged 6 – 36 months to 2026 and inform CAC of this decision.

⁴ CX/EXEC 24/87/2, Appendix 2

⁵ CX/EXEC 24/87/2 Add.1, Appendix 1

⁶ CX/EXEC 24/87/2 Add.1, Appendix 2

Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP)⁷

Adoption

40. CCEEXEC87 recommended that CAC47 adopt the:

- Inclusion of *Sardinella lemuru* in the list of sardine species under Section 2.1 in the *Standard for canned sardines and sardine-type products* (CXS 94-1981);
- Editorial amendments of scientific names in Section 2.1 of CXS 94-1981; and
- Consequential amendments to the labelling provisions for non-retail containers in fish and fishery products standards.

Other issues

41. CCEEXEC87 noted:

- The insertion of *Sardinella fimbriata* and *Amblygaster sirm* (formerly known as *Sardinella sirm*) in CXS 94-1981 based on previous CAC decisions; and
- The considerable interest in future Codex work on seaweed and other algae and the need to consider whether CCFFP takes up new work in this area should such proposals be received and approved by CAC.

Status of CCFFP

Discussion

42. CCEEXEC87 discussed whether CCFFP should be adjourned *sine die* since it had completed the task assigned to it by CAC, or if it should remain active, noting that while there were no new work proposals at this time, there was interest expressed in the Committee on new areas of work on foods of aquatic origin that might be undertaken by CCFFP. Some concerns were raised with regard to how new work might be considered in this context and the Codex Secretariat confirmed that all new work proposals would have to be considered and approved in line with established procedures and whether work should be undertaken by CCFFP, or another committee would depend on the nature of the work and the specific issues to be addressed.

43. At the time of discussion, CCEEXEC87 was informed that a proposal for a new task for CCFFP to review its existing commodity standards had just been submitted to the Codex Secretariat as a CRD for CAC47, and given the need to review this and also noting interest expressed in the report of CCFFP in keeping the committee active, it might be premature to make any recommendation on changing the status of the committee.

Conclusion

44. CCEEXEC87 noted that CCFFP had completed the task assigned to it by CAC and that the normal practice informed by the provisions of the Codex Procedural Manual would be for CAC to adjourn the committee. Noting that a Conference Room Document (CAC47/CRD18) had been received for CAC47 from the host country of CCFFP proposing new work, not yet reviewed, CCEEXEC87 recommended that CAC47 should postpone any decision to adjourn CCFFP pending consideration of the new work proposal and of the appropriate committee to take forward any issues that were identified.

Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF)⁸

Final adoption

45. CCEEXEC87 recommended that CAC47 adopt the:

- MRLs for clopidol (chicken – kidney, liver, muscle and skin/fat) at Step 5/8;
- MRL for imidacloprid (finfish fillet (muscle with skin in natural proportions) and/or muscle) at Step 5/8; and
- Extrapolation of MRLs for veterinary drugs to one or more species at Step 5/8:
 - Lufenuron (finfish – fillet)
 - Emamectin benzoate (finfish – muscle and fillet)
 - Ivermectin (all other ruminants – milk)

⁷ CX/EXEC 24/87/2 Add.1, Appendix 3; CAC47/CRD18 (Benin, Cabo Verde, India, Morocco, Norway, Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, and United Republic of Tanzania, East African Community (EAC))

⁸ CX/EXEC 24/87/2 Add.2, Appendix 1

- Editorial amendment to the *Code of practice on good animal feeding* (CXC 54-2004);
- Revisions to the Risk Analysis Principles applied by CCRVDF in the Codex Procedural Manual:
 - Revisions to Annex C - *Approach for the extrapolation of MRLs for veterinary drugs to one or more species*;
 - Inclusion of Annex D - *Criteria and procedures for the establishment of Action Levels for residues of veterinary drugs in food of animal origin resulting from unavoidable and unintentional veterinary drug carry-over in non-target animal feed*; and
 - Consequential amendment to the section *Establishment of priority list* (paragraph 133, Section IV).

Adoption at Step 5

46. CCEEXEC87 recommended that CAC47 adopt at Step 5 the MRLs for fumagillin dicyclohexylamine (DCH) (fish fillet and honey).

Other issues

47. CCEEXEC87 noted that the approach to extrapolate MRLs to edible offal tissues other than liver and kidney would be further developed and considered at CCRVDF28.

48. CCEEXEC87 congratulated CCRVDF for successfully addressing innovative risk management approaches for the establishment of MRLs for veterinary drugs in foods, such as the new criteria to extrapolate MRLs to camelids, which would allow the establishment of MRLs for this commodity that otherwise would not be possible, and the establishment of action levels for residues of veterinary drugs in foods arising from cross-contamination of feed.

49. CCEEXEC87 supported exploring the scheduling of a virtual session of CCPR and CCRVDF to consider the recommendations of the virtual meeting of the Joint CCPR/CCRVDF EWG, noting that this would be the first time such an arrangement is made and may be used in the future to address other common issues involving different Codex committees.

Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL)⁹

Final Adoption

50. CCEEXEC87 recommended that CAC47 adopt at Step 8 the:

- Revision to the *General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods* (CXS 1-1985): Provisions relevant to allergen labelling;
- Guidelines on the provision of food information for pre-packaged foods to be offered via e-commerce; and
- Guidelines on the use of technology to provide food information in food labelling.

Adoption at Step 5

51. CCEEXEC87 recommended that CAC47 adopt at Step 5 the Annex to the *General Standard for the Labelling of Pre-packaged Foods* (CXS 1-1985): Guidelines on the use of precautionary allergen labelling.

52. CCEEXEC87 agreed to extend the deadline for completion of work on the Annex to CXS 1-1985: Guidelines on the use of precautionary allergen labelling to 2026 and to inform CAC47 of this decision.

Other issues

53. CCEEXEC87 recommended CAC47 to request CCFH to consider updating the *Code of practice on food allergen management for food business operators* (CXC 80-2020) to ensure consistency with the *General standard for the labelling of pre-packaged food* (CXS 1-1985).

New work proposals¹⁰

54. The Codex Secretariat introduced the item, which provided a compilation of all new work proposals submitted for approval by CAC47 with the aim of giving an overview of the breadth and extent of new work on which CAC may embark, to support Critical Review and work management functions of CCEEXEC. The Codex Secretariat indicated that the document also aimed to inform CCEEXEC of forthcoming issues, help identify areas where more structured processes with regard to consideration of new work proposals might be needed e.g. when a

⁹ CX/EXEC 24/87/2 Add.2, Appendix 2

¹⁰ CX/EXEC 24/87/2 Add.3

proposal falls within the purview of committees adjourned *sine die* or there was no relevant committee for the work, and also encouraged feedback on this approach and how it could be improved for the future.

Discussion

General issues related to new work proposals and the overview table

55. The Chairperson highlighted that there were 23 work proposals of various types proposed by committees and this represented a significant increase from recent Commissions, noting that this raised questions regarding prioritization, the workload for Members, Observers, Codex and host secretariats and the number of EWGs that existed. CCEXEC87 embarked on a broad discussion on how such an overview could be optimally used and also considered how CCEXEC exercises its role in reviewing new work proposals and shared the following views:

- The collective presentation of new work proposals was valuable for CCEXEC's critical review and work management functions, although some reflection might be needed to consider how to optimally use this information moving forward;
- Work proposals coming from existing committees have been through a review process and following previous recommendations from CCEXEC, most committees now have work management and prioritization processes in place when discussing whether to submit new work proposals and there was an expectation from CCEXEC that committees only did so when they have the capacity to undertake that new work;
- New work proposals were based on the needs of Members and according to the Codex Strategic Plan, Codex is committed to meeting the needs of Members. Prioritization mechanisms should not override these needs;
- There was a need for guidance on when work should be committed to an EWG and when a new work proposal is mature enough to be presented to CCEXEC and CAC as addressing these could help reduce workloads;
- Practical guidance should be developed on the preparation of new work proposals;
- Work management should be addressed at CAC, CCEXEC and subsidiary body levels, noting that each have different roles and responsibilities;
- The number of EWGs was becoming untenable and guidance, including on the practice of co-chairing EWGs continued to be requested by Members;
- Information on the number of EWGs under each committee, and on their chairs and cochairs of such EWGs should be included in future iterations of the overview table, so that CCEXEC could flag heavy workloads;
- The need for information on scientific advice and availability of resources;
- If the work of CAC continued to increase, then there would be a need for clear criteria for work prioritization to manage workload pressures;
- The overview could help improve overall work management, processes related to new work as well as efficiency;
- The extent and range of proposals was a positive reflection on Codex and of a progressive and responsive agenda developed by committees;
- Ensuring that the existing criteria for new work proposals were fully applied helped ensure that all work proposals had good structure, rigour and rationale behind them;
- CCEXEC might further engage with committee chairpersons on new work proposals so all were aware of the overall level of work of CAC subsidiary bodies and committee chairpersons can provide further insights when needed on work priorities;
- Prioritization at committee level was different from prioritization at CCEXEC level, where consideration should be given to challenges, bottlenecks and resources and there was a reliance on the Codex Secretariat to identify pressures that require prioritization of tasks;
- There was a need for further capacity development among Members, particularly those that were just becoming more active in Codex on areas such as the preparation of new work proposals.

Conclusion

56. CCEEXEC87:

- i. welcomed the document providing an overview of new work proposals and requested that it be presented in this way at future meetings to support critical review and work management;
- ii. recalled that CCEEXEC had empowered and encouraged subsidiary bodies to develop their approaches to prioritisation. CCEEXEC87 recognised that in developing and implementing these approaches, subsidiary bodies reflect the needs of Members and review the technical content of new work proposals;
- iii. noted that the range of new work proposals to be considered by CAC47 demonstrated the progressive and responsive agenda of subsidiary bodies. It also demonstrated the risk of further proliferation in the number of active EWGs which might, in future, require active prioritisation by CCEEXEC across all new work proposals to manage the demands on Members, Observers and the Codex Secretariat; and
- iv. requested that the overview of new work proposals for this and subsequent meetings is shared with chairpersons of subsidiary bodies, to sensitise them to discussions at CCEEXEC regarding work management.

New work proposals submitted for approval by CAC47

57. The Codex Secretariat referred to Table 1, which provided an overview of all new work proposals that had been submitted by active committees since CAC46, noting that CCEEXEC86 had already provided recommendations for proposals from those that had met prior to June 2024.
58. CCEEXEC87 reviewed the proposals from Committees that had met since June 2024, recommended their approval, and made the following additional comments.

CCFICS

59. The Chairperson advised CCEEXEC87 of informal discussions with the Chairperson of CCFICS in preparation for CCEEXEC87 and the assurances that CCFICS could manage the new workload that would result from the approval of work proposals.

CCRVDF - Priority list for JECFA evaluation

60. A Member questioned the timeliness of submission of new work proposals, with reference to compounds for prioritization for evaluation by JECFA that were submitted during the plenary session by CCRVDF. The Member noted that where such practice might be consistent with the procedure, it might not be desirable and enquired whether CCEEXEC could advise on the preferred procedure to submit proposals for inclusion in the priority list.
61. The Codex Secretariat confirmed that no specific timelines were outlined in the *Risk Analysis Principles applied by CCRVDF* concerning establishing a priority list, which allowed proposals to be submitted during the plenary session. However, the practice of issuing a CL and having a PWG before the session to consider the replies to the CL, would allow Codex Members time to comment, review relevant documents, and facilitate preparation prior to the session.
62. The Secretariat acknowledged that adding items to the priority list during the plenary session, might be problematic given Codex Members' reduced time for review. Therefore, it was essential for Members to adhere to established practices to ensure the process's transparency and inclusiveness and facilitate consensus-based decision-making.
63. To contextualize the exceptional situation surrounding the late inclusion of a compound in the priority list during CCRVDF27, the following was brought to the attention of CCEEXEC87:
 - The current procedure and practices followed by CCRVDF require the identification of the compound to be prioritized for evaluation by JECFA. This works well in most cases. However, extraordinary situations, such as broader policy challenges arising from climate change and the need to promote more sustainable farming systems, might necessitate some flexibility and deviation from standard practices and hence the prioritization system must evolve to accommodate emerging challenges without compromising procedural integrity;
 - The compound discussed at CCRVDF27 reflected the rapid evolution of technology and emerging issues. Neither JECFA nor JMPR had had prior opportunities to consider such compounds, involving additional data and risk assessment complexities. While the traditional prioritization process remained the standard, mechanisms might be needed to manage exceptions effectively, ensuring that emerging compounds and technologies receive timely consideration.

Conclusion

64. CCEEXEC87:

- i. encouraged Members to respond to committees' Circular Letters seeking proposals for new work and prioritisation of compounds for evaluation, within the deadlines set out in those Circular Letters; and
- ii. recommended that CAC47 approve all the new work proposals submitted by active committees since June 2024.

New work proposal submitted by a Member - Development of a group standard for certain types of millets

- 65. The Codex Secretariat recalled that the proposal submitted by India had been considered at CAC46 (CAC46/CRD33), which requested further development of the proposal. Following a review by the Codex Secretariat, India and the Host Secretariat, CL 2024/60-CAC was issued. While comments received had shown considerable support for the proposal, several questions had been raised regarding the scope, the specific grains to be included, and its relationship with existing Codex standards for millets.
- 66. A Member indicated that outstanding questions should be addressed before CCEEXEC could recommend whether to approve the proposal and suggested that CAC could consider the establishment of an EWG under CAC to further refine the proposal. The Chairperson acknowledged concerns regarding the burden and efficacy of EWGs under CAC, drawing from past experiences.
- 67. The Chairperson proposed to first evaluate whether the proposal might be recommended for endorsement, and if affirmative, then address appropriate work modalities.

Discussion on the suitability of the new work proposal for approval

- 68. A Member emphasized its technical feasibility and broad scope and its consistency with the Codex Strategic Goals 1 and 3, addressing food safety and fair trade. The Member explained that while existing Codex standards for sorghum and pearl millet should be integrated, processed products like flour were excluded for technical reasons. The Member further noted that key concerns, including the inclusion of pseudo-millets and scope refinements, could be discussed during the development of the standard.
- 69. Other Members expressed the following views:
 - Millets were recognized as important staple grains, making the standard vital for low- and middle-income countries, and therefore the establishment of a millet standard was seen as a timely response to the needs of Codex Members;
 - Some refinement to the project document, including clarification of the proposal's scope was deemed necessary to ensure that all relevant aspects were addressed, thus facilitating endorsement of the new work;
 - The concept of developing group standards for commodities within Codex was highlighted, which was in line with the Codex strategic plan, and would promote plant-based protein consumption and address emerging issues;
 - The importance of incorporating existing millet standards was emphasized.
- 70. CCEEXEC87 noted the general support for recommending approval of the new work proposal, with the understanding that further refinement of the scope was needed.

Discussion on appropriate work modalities

- 71. Since the Codex Committee on Cereals, Pulses and Legumes (CCCPL) was the most appropriate committee to develop the proposed group standard, but currently was adjourned *sine die*, the Chairperson proposed reactivating CCCPL to work by correspondence.
- 72. Members expressed support for this proposal but suggested considering additional modalities such as an EWG or virtual meetings to facilitate more in-depth technical discussions and ensure efficient progress.
- 73. The Codex Secretariat acknowledged that the procedures for working by correspondence as contained in the Codex Procedural Manual did not take account of the use of virtual tools and proposed that CAC47 could allow flexibility to use such tools, thus enabling more dynamic and effective collaboration in line with current technological capabilities.
- 74. CCEEXEC87 noted the following views:
 - There were questions about whether the current provisions for committees working by correspondence were sufficiently clear and robust, or whether a more detailed review was necessary to align them with evolving practices;

- The transition from correspondence to virtual modes required clarification, as at the time the *Criteria and procedural guidelines for Codex committees and ad hoc intergovernmental task forces working by correspondence* were developed, procedures for use of virtual tools were not available. Nowadays, there was an opportunity to integrate various technologies to enhance the work process.
- The upcoming session of the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP) was seen as an appropriate opportunity to address these concerns and establish clearer procedures for reactivating committees and effectively using virtual tools, drawing on the experiences to date of Committees Working by Correspondence;
- A CL had already encouraged host secretariats and Members to review outdated sections of the Codex Procedural Manual, and the section on reactivating committees and use of modern tools had been identified as an area requiring attention, as current practices had begun to diverge significantly from the provisions in the Codex Procedural Manual;

75. CCEEXEC87 noted the general support to reactivating CCCPL to work by correspondence on this item; and to ensure the relevant provisions in the Codex Procedural Manual were consistent with the current practices.

Conclusion

76. CCEEXEC87 recommended that CAC47:

- approve the new work proposal to develop a group standard for certain types of millets and reactivate CCCPL, to work by correspondence, with the flexibility to convene an EWG or work by virtual means as appropriate.
 - CCEEXEC87 noted comments received which indicated the need to refine the scope and invited the proposers to revisit the new work proposal and provide CAC47 with a revised proposal, taking into consideration the existing standards for millet noting that a group standard for millet should include all millets and that different approaches to standardisation should not be taken for different millet grains.
- request that CCGP:
 - review the application of the provisions in the Codex Procedural Manual relating to Committees Working by Correspondence, informed by experiences to date; and
 - make recommendations for consideration by CCEEXEC89 and CAC48.

New work proposals under development not falling under the purview of an active committee

- The Codex Secretariat recalled that CCEEXEC86 had been alerted to several new work proposals under preparation (standards for camel milk and spirulina), and a proposal for an amendment (*Standard for kimchi* (CXS 223-2001)), for which there was no active or relevant committee to consider. Noting the importance CCEEXEC gave to technical review of new work proposals, there was a need to identify an analogous process that could be used to facilitate consideration of such proposals. The Codex Secretariat further noted that a proposal related to standard setting in the area of camel milk had just been received for consideration by CAC47 and a proposed amendment to the *Standard for kimchi* (addition of the name kimchi cabbage alongside Chinese cabbage) might be submitted.
- The Chairperson noted that this was an opportunity for an initial and thoughtful discussion, and that recommendations could also be given to how CAC might address some of the upcoming issues.
- Members highlighted the importance of having materials available to guide them on the preparation of discussion papers and project documents, and requested an update from the Codex Secretariat of the previously requested practical guidance for new work proposals. The Codex Secretariat noted that in 2024, the focus had been on completion of the EWG handbook, which would be launched during CAC47, and that work on the requested guidance was scheduled for 2025.
- CCEEXEC Members shared the following views:

- The development of group standards for commodities was supported as a progressive and efficient means of addressing standardization needs for a range of commodities;
- The EWG handbook and the guidance on new work proposals or needs in that regard should be included as a prominent part of the agenda of coordinating committees to facilitate building awareness and deepen the knowledge among Members on these areas;
- The emerging trend of more countries volunteering to be co-chairs of EWGs could contribute to inclusivity but could also present a burden on EWG chairs in terms of coordination and hence it was important that the guidance on EWGs addressed issues related to chairing and co-chairing;

- Commodity standards might be developed for emerging or well-established products in international trade. With regard to the latter, for efficiency purposes, Codex could consider existing international standards as a basis for the Codex standard to expedite the work;
- Regarding the potential to use a regional committee to consider a topic of international relevance (e.g. kimchi), care would need to be taken to ensure that a transparent and inclusive process was followed;
- The process of consideration of the new work proposal for millets could be applied more generally, without prejudging the decisions of CAC;
- There was a need to find suitable ways forward on how existing procedures could be used as a basis to develop practices to support review of new work proposals;
- The importance of looking at alternative options within existing procedures and structures to address new work proposals was important as costs to host secretariats on running or reactivating committees were significant.

81. It was clarified that any requests to CCGP at this stage would not involve potential procedural revisions, but rather how to fully benefit from existing procedures.

Conclusion

82. CCEEXEC87 welcomed the Codex Secretariat's plans to develop practical guidelines for Members on the development of new work proposals and proposed:

- i. that the guidelines should encourage:
 - development of group commodity standards,
 - the drafting of commodity standards so as to facilitate future enlargement of their scope by adding similar products, and
 - a review of standards that may have been developed by other organizations for commodities for which there is established international trade;
- ii. that the Codex Secretariat engages with Members through the forthcoming FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees to build awareness of the development of these guidelines, and also the Handbook on EWGs, and seek input on issues that Members would wish to see included in these guidelines.

83. CCEEXEC87 recommended that CAC47 request CCGP to:

- i. review how existing provisions of the Codex Procedural Manual may be used to promote more resource-efficient practices in the review of new work proposals, in particular those for which there may not be a relevant existing or active committee that might undertake their technical review; and
- ii. make recommendations for consideration by CCEEXEC89 and CAC48.

84. CCEEXEC87 recalled that for new work proposals for which the relevant committee was adjourned *sine die*, there was a need to seek the views of Members and Observers on need for the new work and the content of any new work and recommended that this should be done in an inclusive, timely and resource-efficient way.

85. CCEEXEC87 recommended that:

- i. should CAC47 decide that further work be considered in relation to camel milk, it considers issuing a Circular Letter to seek input from Members and Observers on the need and possible extent of any new work on camel milk; and
- ii. should CAC47 agree to consider any proposed amendment of the *Standard for Kimchi*, views should be sought from Members and Observers by means of a Circular Letter on the need to amend the standard and the suitability of the proposed amendment in line with Section 2, part 7 of the Codex Procedural Manual.

Proposed amendment of the General standard for fruit juices and nectars (CXS 247-2005)¹¹

86. The Codex Secretariat introduced the item, noting that the EWG report recognized that it had not been possible to reach consensus in the EWG but that the EWG Chair had recommended CAC47 to adopt the proposed amendment considering the technical consent expressed by most EWG participants for the proposed amendments. Noting that the output from the EWG and comments from the CL did not appear to offer an

¹¹ CX/EXEC 24/87/2 Add.4

uncontroversial solution, and CAC would need to determine how to proceed, and the Chairperson invited CCEXEC to consider if and how it might advise CAC on this matter.

Discussion

87. CCEXEC87 members expressed the following views:

- Facts around this issue should be recognized both in terms of the lack of consensus in the EWG, and the recommendation of the Chair of the EWG that CAC still positively consider the amendment based on technical information provided;
- Members of one region had expressed support to the proposed amendment and expressed concern that those not supporting the amendment had not provided alternatives or substantive arguments and recalled the importance of being responsive to the needs of Members in line with the Codex Strategic Plan;
- Another Member noted that EWG participants from their region had expressed both technical and procedural concerns;
- The importance of striving towards consensus at CAC47;
- If consensus could not be reached at CAC47, then the option should be to discontinue the work at this time noting that a new work proposal can be submitted at any time;
- Other options than discontinuation should also be explored should consensus not be reached at CAC47, such as facilitating further discussion on the amendment;
- Although consensus was not reached in the EWG, it had nevertheless served a valuable role in highlighting the issues to be addressed regarding this amendment, and consensus might be achieved by another mechanism.

88. The Chairperson, noting that while consensus was elusive in the EWG, encouraged efforts to find consensus and exhaust all avenues to reach consensus before other decision-making avenues are pursued. The Chairperson also reminded CCEXEC that as this work had not gone through the step procedure, it had not had the benefit of all the interactions that might enable Members to reach consensus.

Conclusion

89. CCEXEC87:

- i. noted the EWG report;
- ii. encouraged all parties to come together to explore whether a consensual resolution could be found at CAC47; and
- iii. recognized that in the absence of consensus at CAC47, in considering how to proceed, CAC47 may, among other options, wish to consider discontinuation of the work, noting that a new work proposal may be submitted by any Member at any stage.

Matter referred from CCFL to CCEXEC and CAC¹²

90. The Codex Secretariat informed CCEXEC87 that CCFL48 could not reach consensus to endorse section 8.3.2, labelling provision on country of harvest, of the Standard for dried floral parts – dried saffron and had thus referred the matter to CCEXEC87 and CAC47 for consideration. At CCFL48, Members had expressed divergent views on whether the country of harvest could be mandatory, a provision so far not applied in Codex texts, or whether it should be optional, like in other standards for spices and culinary herbs.

91. It was recalled that CAC45 had adopted the Standard for dried floral parts – dried saffron at Step 8 noting that publication of the standard would be subject to endorsement of the labelling provisions by CCFL (and food additive provisions by CCFA). After that, there had been a dialogue between CCSCH and CCFL regarding the labelling provisions on country of origin / country of harvest. The Codex Secretariat noted that “country of harvest” had not been defined in Codex, but that “harvest” had been defined in the Glossary of terms for CCSCH, which had the status of information document of this committee.¹³

Discussion

92. CCEXEC87 noted the importance of clarity on whether country of harvest could be a mandatory declaration, in particular for high value spices. Considering that discussions had been ongoing for several years and that

¹² CX/EXEC 24/87/2 Add. 2, item 6; REP/FL24 paras 27 ff.

¹³ <https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/committees/committee/related-information-documents/en/?committee=CCSCH>

the difference between country of origin and country of harvest was not universally recognized, CCEEXEC87 noted the need for a solution. CCEEXEC87 was in agreement that a more horizontal approach would be beneficial rather than focusing on a single spice.

93. Members expressed the following views:

- The importance of avoiding a new deadlock on the issue by ensuring an inclusive and interactive mechanism;
- The importance of involving both CCSCH and CCFL in any process established;
- CCFL was the appropriate committee to consider the issue given its responsibility for food labelling;
- The need to consider needs of both producing and importing countries;
- The need for clarifying the difference between country of origin and country of harvest;
- The need for careful consideration regarding proposing any amendments to CXS 1-1985.

94. Members supported publication of the Standard for dried floral parts – dried saffron, pending resolution of outstanding issues. Following an extensive conversation, CCEEXEC87 agreed that it would not provide any recommendations regarding the publication of the Standard for dried floral parts – dried saffron.

Conclusion

95. CCEEXEC87 recognized the need for a solution that was inclusive, timely and resource efficient, and recommended that CAC47:

- i. request that the Codex Secretariat to issue a CL to Members and Observers seeking potential solutions to the use of country of harvest in food labelling of spices, recognizing the concerns that had been expressed by Codex Members;
- ii. establish an EWG, reporting to CCFL, with terms of reference, language regime, Chairperson and co-Chairpersons to be determined by CAC47, to consider responses to the CL and advise CCFL49;
- iii. invite CCSCH8 to also consider responses to the CL and make its own observations to CCFL49;
- iv. strongly encourage Codex Members to ensure that discussions in the EWG, CCSCH8 and CCFL49 be informed by all relevant interests; and
- v. invite CCFL49 to consider issues related to the use of country of harvest in food labelling of spices and to propose options which recognize the concerns that had been expressed by Codex Members.

96. CCEEXEC87 noted the approach of holding any recommendation to CAC regarding adoption of draft standards at Step 8 or Step 5/8, pending the completion of the endorsement procedure, should be used consistently by CCEEXEC in its critical review, in accordance with the provisions in Part 2, Critical Review, of Section 2 of the Codex Procedural Manual.

CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2025 – IMPLEMENTATION REPORT 2022-2023 (Agenda item 3)¹⁴

97. The Codex Secretariat introduced the item, highlighting that the implementation report monitors achievements in the 2022-23 biennium against the indicators set out in the revised monitoring framework that had been agreed at CCEEXEC84 and endorsed by CAC46. It was noted that activities had returned to pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels. While performance under most indicators scored well, challenges remained in relation to engagement in Codex and the timeliness of documents under Goals 4 and 5, respectively. Several indicators could now be measured thanks to the survey on the use and impact of Codex texts, funded by extra-budgetary resources. The Codex Secretariat emphasized the efforts made to improve and streamline the monitoring framework, and the lessons learned from this exercise that would be considered in proposing a monitoring framework for the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031.

Discussion

98. Members thanked the Codex Secretariat for the comprehensive report and raised the following points:

- The valuable collaboration between the Codex Secretariat and WTO to obtain information on the use and impact of Codex texts, in particular collaboration with both the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Committees;
- The information stemming from the report on the particular importance of Codex texts for Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs);

¹⁴ CX/CAC 24/47/20

- The importance of providing timely scientific advice, as well as the concern that this relied partly on extra-budgetary funding and the need to secure sustainable funding for this critical programme;
- To consider a possible indicator on the submission of data from Members for risk assessment by scientific advice bodies;
- The possibility of presenting awareness-raising activities carried-out during the biennium as an indicator of raising visibility of Codex work;
- The increased participation rate in virtual meetings compared to physical meetings, and the need to take that into consideration when planning meetings, including resource implications;
- The cost of conducting the survey on the use and impact of Codex texts and the need to identify more cost-effective solutions to collect data;
- The importance of aligning the monitoring frameworks for the implementation of Codex Trust Fund (CTF) projects and the Codex Strategic Plan to facilitate measuring progress;
- The importance of monitoring results from the implementation of CTF projects that could also support advocating for additional funding;
- The resource constraints that the Codex Secretariat worked under, and the need to take this into consideration in the context of the critical review;
- The need to assess the contribution of Codex work to the achievement of the Sustainable Developments Goals (SDGs), One Health and other sustainability related initiatives;
- The need to identify more quantitative indicators to measure progress, and a synthesis of these to support better informed management decisions;
- The need to ensure indicators under the new Strategic Plan are outcome oriented;
- The need to reach wider audiences using different communication channels and to enhance accessibility.

99. The Codex Secretariat thanked Members for the rich discussion and made the following comments:

- The monitoring framework had progressed over time, with several iterations, trying to provide more complete and accurate information. While some suggestions made would be taken into consideration in presenting the final report on the implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025, proposals on the indicators and in particular more quantitative indicators would be considered while preparing a proposal for the monitoring of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031.
- The survey on the use and impact of Codex texts was the least expensive option presented to CCEXEC to build a mechanism to monitor the use and impact of Codex texts, compared to undertaking case studies or collaborating with WTO and was a valuable source of data for some of the indicators used to monitor the implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan.
- Noted the support for the collaboration with WTO in the area of monitoring, that started in 2024, together with the two other standard setting organizations under the SPS agreement. While initial discussions had focused on the SPS committee, the Codex Secretariat was also in contact with the TBT Secretariat and would look into means of further collaboration.
- An annual report on the Codex contribution to the achievement of SDGs was submitted through FAO to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which contributed to increasing visibility. The Codex Secretariat aimed to take advantage of cost-effective opportunities to raise the profile of Codex and would also be interested in hearing from Members about opportunities in this regard
- While efforts were made to increase and improve the quality of the indicators, also taking into account resources available and the different outcomes of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025, quantitative indicators could not be defined for all dimensions of the monitoring framework and a narrative was provided instead.
- Noted the interest in expanding the reach of communication products and highlighted that the focus was on cost effective means of communication. The Secretariat was willing to work with Members to expand communication reach in line with available resources and noted that the FAO/WHO regional coordinating committees also were an important avenue for outreach and information sharing.

100. The FAO representative thanked the Members for their strong support that had led to an increase of the budget for scientific advice several years ago. The FAO representative further pointed out that sustained support by Codex Members at the appropriate FAO governing bodies meetings would remain critical to maintaining the current levels of fundings. In addition, the FAO representative recalled that the requests for scientific advice by Codex Alimentarius, regularly outstrip the funds available, and FAO would have to rely on extrabudgetary funds to be able to maintain the current level of scientific advice provided to Codex.

101. The WHO representative noted that the funding situation for the provision of scientific advice to Codex differed significantly between WHO and FAO, and that WHO was not able to secure a sustainable budget for these activities and remained dependent on a small number of Member States for their voluntary contributions for which deep gratitude for their indispensable support was expressed. In light of this situation, WHO had reached out to other Members to encourage additional voluntary contributions to scientific advice. The WHO Representative emphasized the importance of exploring sustainable financial mechanisms within the framework of WHO to support the provision of scientific advice to Codex, highlighting the need to ensure the continuity and reliability of this critical programme.

Conclusion

102. CCEEXEC87:

- i. noted the analysis provided, which was a valuable source of information on the trajectory towards addressing the goals of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and supported the identification of areas of focus for the remainder of 2024-2025, which was the final biennium of this strategic plan period;
- ii. reaffirmed the importance of timely submission of a draft monitoring and evaluation framework for the draft Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031, and in this regard the particular value of quantitative indicators and their synthesis to inform judgements on the achievement of outcomes; and
- iii. looked forward to receiving the final implementation report for the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025.

CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2031 (Agenda item 4)¹⁵

103. The Chairperson briefly introduced this item, recalling the progress made on the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 since CAC46, including the formal and informal consultations with Members and Observers, discussions at CCEEXEC86, the pre-CCEEXEC workshop held on 17 November 2024 and subsequent informal discussions in the margins of CCEEXEC87. The Chairperson also noted Members' commitment to progressing the development of the Strategic Plan. As result CRD01 proposed a final draft of strategic goals and outcomes for consideration by CCEEXEC87. Further work would be needed to develop a final draft of the remaining elements of the draft Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031.

Discussion

104. CCEEXEC87 first considered and approved the strategic goals and outcomes as contained in CRD01.

105. With agreement on the ambition to provide CAC47 with a complete strategic plan (minus the monitoring framework) discussion continued on the previously drafted Vision; Mission; Core values; a narrative on Drivers for change; the Role of Codex; and High-level description of Codex ways of working of the Codex strategic plan 2026-2031 and Members agreed on the following points:

Vision, Mission and Core Values

- Members agreed to retain the vision, mission and core values as proposed and in line with the current strategic plan.

Introduction

- Discussion focused on the final paragraph which remained in square brackets.¹⁶ This was considered unnecessary and repetitive by some Members, while others thought that it introduced other elements of the strategic plan and that it did not contradict the strategic goals, nor their chapeau. After discussion, and in the spirit of compromise, it was agreed to retain the text and remove the square brackets.

¹⁵ CX/CAC 24/47/21; CRD01 (Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 – Workshop results)

¹⁶ "The objective of this strategic plan is to advance the statutory purpose of the Codex Alimentarius Commission during the period 2026-2031. This document does not supersede, extend, or contradict the Codex statutory purpose or provisions of the Procedural Manual."

Drivers for Change

- Reference to loss of biodiversity in the first paragraph of this section was the only wording that remained between square brackets. While some Members considered this reference as very important, others were of the view that there was no direct link between biodiversity loss and food safety, and so this reference should be deleted;
- One Member viewed the drivers for change as a backdrop in which the strategic plan was framed. This section included five paragraphs that were to be considered together. The Member proposed to replace the reference to several issues (including climate change, loss of biodiversity, pollution, and water scarcity) with the term “triple planetary crisis” as this term was widely used by the United Nations and mentioned in several official documents;
- While some Members supported the proposed amendment, others were of the view that the link with Codex work was not apparent. Some Members also expressed concerns over the lack of familiarity of this term by Codex Members and the risk that they did not understand it. Another Member proposed further amendments to indicate that the triple planetary crisis was contributing to agrifood system transformation which in turn may introduce challenges and opportunities for Codex. However, consensus remained elusive;
- The prevailing view was that it was the role of CCEEXEC to make clear recommendations to CAC on the strategic plan;
- With the goal to advance the discussion and present a complete strategic plan to CAC47, Members, in the spirit of compromise, agreed to delete the paragraph and keep the first sentence only, as follows: “The environment in which Codex operates continues to evolve”.

The role of Codex

- Some text remained between square brackets in the third paragraph regarding whether Codex was continuing or strengthening its pivotal role. One Member noted that the aim was in fact to do both of those and proposed the language be adjusted to reflect that. CCEEXEC87 agreed to following wording: “As we move into the future, Codex can strengthen the pivotal role it plays in supporting the advancement of global goals by developing international food standards”.

A high-level description of Codex ways of working

- In light of the formulation of the strategic goals and outcomes, the section on Codex ways of working was not considered necessary anymore and thus deleted.

106. One Member expressed the need to be able to review the monitoring framework of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 before approving the plan in its entirety and questioned whether this work should be completed before submitting the plan for approval by CAC. The Codex Secretariat explained that the monitoring framework was developed based on the strategic goals and outcomes and that a draft monitoring framework would be presented to CCEEXEC88 for their review and further development as needed, so that it could be presented to CAC48.

107. Members agreed to present for approval by CAC47 the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031, noting that the monitoring framework would be developed by the Codex Secretariat and discussed by CCEEXEC88. Comments on the monitoring framework would then be sought from Members and Observers through a CL, and a final version of the monitoring framework would be submitted to CAC48 for approval.

Conclusion

108. CCEEXEC87 recommended that CAC47:

- i. note the work undertaken to date on the development of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031, including the opportunities to provide input both formally and informally;
- ii. adopt the draft Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 as contained in Appendix II; and
- iii. note that the Codex Secretariat would present a monitoring framework at CCEEXEC88 for review, and that comments on the revised version of the monitoring framework would then be sought from Members and Observers through a CL with the aim of submitting a final version to CAC48 for approval.

CODEX BUDGETARY AND FINANCIAL MATTERS (Agenda item 5)¹⁷

109. The Codex Chairperson introduced the document recalling the need for sustained funding of the Codex Secretariat and the opportunity to provide advice through CAC to the Director-Generals of FAO and WHO on the 2026-2027 budget.

Discussion

110. Members thanked the Codex Secretariat for the document, including the additional information on a costed work plan, and made the following comments:

- In light of the different level of contribution of FAO and WHO to the Codex budget, WHO was encouraged to increase its contribution, and/or to offset the additional funding needed to hold CCEXEC and CAC sessions in Geneva compared to Rome;
- In support of efforts to resource the five areas of work identified, requests for additional funding by Members from FAO had to be made at FAO Council in December 2024 where the budget for the 2026-2027 biennium would be finalized;
- Preference to hold CCEXEC and CAC meetings more frequently in Rome, noting that it would be more cost-effective for both the Codex Secretariat and delegates, also considering the different level of contribution of FAO and WHO;
- Preference to convene CCEXEC sessions as in-person meetings to optimise their effectiveness;
- While appreciating the additional information provided, further details on expenditures by activity (e.g. on translation, interpretation, travel and IT expenses) were needed for CCEXEC Members to be able to advise on prioritization. This would also be in line with the new proposed strategic goals on improving efficiency of Codex work;
- Further discussion was needed on how to support re-activation of adjourned committees in a cost neutral way, noting this was a core activity;
- The need to continue providing detailed information on the budget and expenditure in future reports;
- Appreciation for the extra-budgetary contributions to the Codex Secretariat;
- The five areas requiring additional funding were considered as necessary to deliver Codex work and respond to Members' needs and therefore required urgent funding, also recalling the recommendation of the FAO Programme Committee to continue strengthening normative and standard-setting work, including Codex;
- More cost-efficient ways of delivering on some of the areas of work might need to be considered;
- The Codex Secretariat should be given the flexibility to outsource translation of its documents, noting that this would improve the timeliness of documents;
- The 2022-2023 expenditure report should be included in the working document for CAC;
- The criticality of certain activities such as updating of databases and publication of texts.

111. The Codex Secretariat thanked CCEXEC Members for the rich discussion and made the following comments:

- Decisions on the modality and venue of CCEXEC88 would be based on a review of resources for 2025 following implementation of CAC47;
- Activities needed to be considered in a holistic way, and indications on the areas of focus were appreciated with the understanding that there was a trade-off with other areas that would need to be de-prioritized;
- Monitoring of efficiency only through budget allocation and delivery provided a one-dimensional perspective that did not recognise other elements which contributed to efficiency related to processes, technologies used and dedication of human resources;
- Highlighted the important role of CCEXEC in terms of identifying priorities, noting that this would enable the Secretariat to manage the budget in line with those priorities, and that if CCEXEC and CAC were keen that new technologies were explored to facilitate our work to provide clear direction in that regard;

¹⁷ CX/EXEC 24/87/5

- Providing this level of detail in financial matters paper was resource intensive and requested clarification on the level and type of detail expected, noting that there was a point of diminishing returns.

Conclusion

112. CCEXEC87:

- welcomed the detailed budgetary and financial information presented in the document and appreciated in particular its forward-looking elements;
- acknowledged the extra-budgetary contributions from Japan, Republic of Korea and Singapore to Codex, and the substantial resources that the host countries for each of the Codex subsidiary bodies commit to Codex on an ongoing basis;
- noted that unfunded areas of work in the current biennium were nevertheless important foundations for the normative work of Codex.
- noted that FAO Council was one of the few remaining opportunities for Members to influence discussions relating to funding by FAO or WHO in the current biennium;
- noted that costs related to meetings in Geneva were higher than in Rome for the Codex Secretariat and for delegates;
- asked WHO to advise on whether and how associated costs might be offset in the Codex budget so that the costs for holding meetings in Geneva was not higher than in Rome;
- in the meantime, CCEXEC87 proposed that meetings of CAC and CCEXEC should be held more frequently in Rome than Geneva.

113. CCEXEC87 recommended that CAC47:

- request Members to advocate for additional funding at FAO Council and WHO Governing Bodies to address the non-recurring unfunded requirements through a special allocation of USD 2.1 million; and the recurrent funding requirements through a permanent increase of the Codex Secretariat budget of USD 2 million;
- note the need for a continued commitment to financial transparency and better prioritization and redistribution of resources to support efficient delivery of the Codex work programme;
- recommend to the Directors-General of FAO and WHO to jointly explore opportunities for more equitable funding for Codex, consistent with the joint nature of the Joint Food Standards Programme that the two organisations have designated CAC to administer;
- request the Codex Secretariat to explore the extent to which interpretation and translation services might be provided more economically, using innovative tools and approaches; and
- request the Codex Secretariat to provide on an annual basis, at the CCEXEC session immediately preceding CAC, a cost-breakdown by activity

MATTERS ARISING FROM FAO AND WHO (Agenda item 6)¹⁸

114. The Representatives of FAO and WHO introduced the item referring to the information contained in the working document.

115. One Member highlighted the importance of ensuring an adequate budget for the scientific advice programme and recalled the valuable discussion of this issue at CAC42, noting that since then there had been some progress in FAO in securing a sustainable budget, but less so at WHO, despite the efforts made. The Member proposed to provide a strong follow-up recommendation to CAC47 noting the importance of scientific advice to the work of Codex.

116. Another Member highlighted the importance of contributions of FAO and WHO to capacity development efforts at regional levels and the positive feedback on such initiatives.

Conclusion

117. CCEXEC87:

- noted the information provided and expressed appreciation for the important work being done by FAO and WHO in support of development and implementation of Codex standards and related texts;

¹⁸ CX/CAC 24/47/22

- ii. recognized the importance of the Joint FAO/WHO scientific advisory bodies to underpin the work of Codex;
- iii. recognized the benefits to Codex Members of capacity building and awareness raising events delivered both physically and virtually, and supported their continuation as part of an appropriately blended approach that continues to build engagement;
- iv. recommended that CAC47 recommend that FAO continue to provide sound and sustainable funding to the scientific advice programme that supports the work of Codex; and
- v. recommended that CAC47 request the Director General of WHO to secure additional sustainable funding for the provision of scientific advice to Codex by WHO.

APPLICATIONS FROM INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR OBSERVER STATUS IN CODEX (Agenda item 7)¹⁹

Introduction

118. The Codex Secretariat introduced the item noting the applications contained in the working document had been carefully checked in collaboration with the Legal Offices of WHO and FAO and that they had been found to be complete and receivable.

World Federation for Animals (WFA)

119. The Codex Secretariat recalled that CCEEXEC86²⁰ had requested the Codex Secretariat to invite WFA to provide further clarification on their core mandate and core functions, and the expected contribution to Codex work. The requested information had been provided, which was subject to consideration by CCEEXEC87.

Discussion

120. CCEEXEC87 thanked WFA for providing the requested information and for its interest in the work of Codex, and noted the following views:

- Animal welfare and protection did not fall under the statutory purpose of Codex, but rather within the remit of other international organizations such as the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and that, WFA was already participating in that forum and in the Quadripartite Antimicrobial Resistance Multi Stakeholder partnership platform (MSPP) hosted by FAO;
- The work of WFA on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and food systems was closely related to Codex work and could therefore contribute to its aims equally as other NGOs holding observer status with Codex;
- The response shared by WFA did not provide the requested information on the expected contribution to the work of Codex, with particular reference to its statutory purpose of protecting consumer health and ensuring fair practices in the food trade;
- The need for a systematic evaluation of applications for observer status that would also consider if they aligned with the values and/or principles of Codex;
- Codex could in the near future be assessing compounds which could have potential animal welfare implications such as environmental inhibitors, noting the importance of having observers which could provide the necessary information as part of the process;
- WFA could contribute to Codex work in different fora and modalities, regardless of a positive consideration of its application for Observer Status;
- AMR and animal feed were an important component of the food chain, and that it would therefore be important to receive information from similar entities and have them in the list of Codex Observers;
- The contribution of WFA to Codex work could be assessed at a later stage under the Review of NGOs with Observer Status with Codex.

121. In response to a question regarding the level of details that an entity needed to provide in the application form, with particular reference to future contributions to the work of Codex, the Codex Secretariat clarified that the “expected contribution” to Codex work was one of the lines included in the application form as contained in the Codex Procedural Manual, under Section VII. CCEEXEC, in reviewing applications of NGOs, could request these entities to provide further information based on their initial analysis.

¹⁹ CX/EXEC 24/87/3

²⁰ REP24/EXEC1, paras 95 and 96 i.

122. In response to questions regarding the Review of International Non-Governmental Organizations with Observer Status in Codex, the Codex Secretariat recalled that the next review was scheduled in about three years and that such a Review would thoroughly consider participation of NGO Observers in Codex work, without at the same time providing an assessment on the quality of such a participation.

International Association of Plant Bakers (AIBI Aisbl)

123. CCEXEC87 noted that the application by AIBI Aisbl was complete and could be considered favorably.

Conclusion

124. CCEXEC87 recommended that the Directors-General of FAO and WHO grant Observer Status to the International Association of Plant Bakers (AIBI Aisbl).

125. CCEXEC87 was unable to agree on whether Observer Status could be granted to the World Federation for Animals (WFA), and agreed to revisit its application in July 2027 in the light of the implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda item 8)

126. CCEXEC87 noted that there was no other business to discuss.

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LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS
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¹ The established practice at CCEXEC is for a single person from a Member country elected on a geographic basis to be that Member's delegate for the entire duration of a session of CCEXEC, including any ancillary activities such as informal workshops. India requested to alternate the person attending CCEXEC87 as its delegate, in its role as the Member elected on a geographic basis for Asia. This was a significant divergence from our established practice, but there was no legal bar to doing so.

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CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2031

Vision

“Where the world comes together to create food safety and quality standards to protect everyone everywhere.”

Mission

“Protect consumer health and promote fair practices in the food trade by setting international, science-based food safety and quality standards.”

Core values

The Codex Alimentarius Commission re-commits itself to the following core values, which will guide its work to fulfil its strategic vision:

- Inclusiveness
- Collaboration
- Consensus building¹
- Transparency

Introduction

The Codex Alimentarius Commission was established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1963. Today it has 188 Member Countries and one Member Organization. In addition, 240 intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations are accredited as Observers.

The Commission’s statutory purpose² is the development of international food standards, guidelines and codes of practice to protect the health of consumers and ensure fair practices in the food trade. With increased globalization and increases in the volumes of food traded internationally, the Commission must also be capable of responding in a timely manner to the impacts of emerging trends and challenges to consumer health protection of fair practices in the food trade, to the extent that steps to address those impacts are amenable to standardization.

In conducting its work, the Commission takes into account, where appropriate, the relevant policies, strategies and guidelines of FAO and WHO, and of other intergovernmental organizations consistent with fulfilling its unique purpose to protect the health of consumers and ensure fair practices in the food trade through the development of international food standards. Codex works closely on matters of common interest with such organizations, as appropriate.

The objective of this strategic plan is to advance the statutory purpose of the Codex Alimentarius Commission during the period 2026-2031. This document does not supersede, extend, or contradict the Codex statutory purpose or provisions of the Procedural Manual.

Drivers for change

The environment in which Codex operates continues to evolve. Both the FAO and WHO strategic directions on food safety acknowledge the importance of food control systems, based on scientific evidence, in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals. They also recognize the importance of agri-food systems in responding to major global drivers ranging from environmental changes and digital advances to emerging hazards in the food chain and the approaches to mitigating these challenges, such as food system transformation and promotion of the One Health approach.³

The One Health joint plan of action (2022-2026) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) quadripartite also highlights the importance of a One Health approach to food safety.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) acknowledges the centrality of Codex standard setting in the multilateral system in the context of emerging global challenges.

¹ Consensus should be based on the Measures to Facilitate Consensus included in the Procedural Manual.

² Statutes of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Article 1(a).

³ FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031, FAO Strategic Priorities for Food Safety within the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031 and WHO Global Strategy for Food Safety 2022-2030.

All these initiatives point to the important role food safety plays to support public health, food security and trade and the need to integrate foresight and preparedness for the emerging issues to come. They further highlight that food safety has a critical role in the successful transformation of the agrifood system in order to meet the needs of the world.

The role of Codex

The Commission must maintain a steady focus on its statutory purpose. It must be sufficiently capable of being proactive, flexible and responding in a timely manner to emerging issues that impact on food safety and quality⁴ with the aim of protecting consumer health and ensuring fair practices in the food trade.

The system for Codex standards elaboration has served well in the 60 years that Codex has been in existence. The system is anchored in the process described in the Procedural Manual with the product being Codex standards, guidelines and codes of practice, commonly referred to as Codex texts. The Commission, as risk manager, establishes Codex texts that when incorporated into national legislation by Members contribute to ensuring that food is safe and can be traded. The scientific basis that underpins Codex texts is fundamental to ensuring that Codex maintains its pre-eminence as the international reference for food safety and fair practices in food trade, as well as the primary source of science-based food standards for many countries and recognized by the WTO.

As we move into the future, Codex can strengthen the pivotal role it plays in supporting the advancement of global goals by developing international food standards. Collaboration across the multilateral system for trade and food, offers Codex and its members numerous benefits, including enhanced food safety, strengthened partnerships, effective risk communication, regulatory harmonization, and the ability to address complex global challenges.

Codex texts can provide an enabling environment which facilitates the uptake and implementation of policies and programmes to address global challenges around areas such as climate change, environment, sustainability, and trade. In doing so, Codex recognizes that the inherent international diversity of food systems means that, different values or solutions may be relevant in different national or regional situations or contexts.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Chapeau

The Codex Alimentarius Commission commits itself to work towards achievement of the following Strategic and Functional Goals within the Codex purpose⁵:

Strategic Goal 1: Respond to Members' needs for protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in the food trade in an evolving global landscape by developing science-based standards and related texts

- Foresight and horizon-scanning activities are used to support the identification of issues likely to impact food safety, quality and trade.
- Scientific advice that addresses the needs identified by CAC and subsidiary bodies is primarily provided by FAO and WHO and their joint scientific advisory bodies, informed by globally representative data and appropriate international expertise and methodology.
- Scientific advice is used by CAC and subsidiary bodies in line with Codex risk analysis principles.
- Codex standards and related texts are developed, reviewed and adopted in a timely, transparent and inclusive manner.

Strategic Goal 2: Enhance Codex work management systems and practices that support the effective and efficient development of standards and related texts

- Work management systems and practices are refined and enhanced, leveraging digital and other new technologies.
- Mechanisms to prioritize proposals to develop new or revise existing standards and related texts are in place.
- Chairpersons, coordinators, host secretariats, Codex Contact Points and delegates are supported in their respective roles and their capabilities are developed and enhanced.
- Codex Members are enabled to participate actively and sustainably throughout the standard-setting process.

⁴ 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. Consensus should be based on the Measures to Facilitate Consensus included in the Procedural Manual.

⁵ Article 1, Statutes of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Codex Procedural Manual

Strategic Goal 3: Strengthen relationships with relevant international organizations, promoting a coordinated approach to address global challenges

- The mutual understanding of the roles of CAC and relevant international organizations in relation to global challenges is improved and is supported by ongoing consultation between the parties.
- Gaps in approaches to addressing global challenges that Codex could contribute to are identified through targeted engagement with relevant international organizations.
- The contribution of CAC to the transition towards sustainable and resilient food systems, is identified and considered.
- Contributions from relevant international organizations throughout the development of Codex texts are encouraged.

Strategic Goal 4: Maximize the impact of Codex by increasing the visibility and use of standards

- The profile and recognition of Codex as the international food standards setting body for protecting consumer health and ensuring fair practices in food trade is enhanced.
- The use of Codex texts in the context of integrative approaches such as One Health is promoted.
- Harmonization through the increased use of Codex texts in establishing national food control systems and regulations is advocated for.