



**Food and Agriculture  
Organization of  
the United Nations**



**World Health  
Organization**

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**CL 2012/14-ASIA  
May 2012**

**TO:** Codex Contact Points  
Interested International Organisations

**FROM:** Secretariat, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme,  
Codex Alimentarius Commission,  
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla,  
00153 Rome, Italy

**SUBJECT: Request for Comments and information on:**  
**A. National Food Control Systems and Consumer Participation in Food Standards Setting**  
**B. Use of Codex Standards at the National Level**  
**C. Nutrition Issues within the Region**  
**D. Issues Relevant to the Region**  
**E. Status of Implementation of the Strategic Plan for the CCASIA 2009-2014**

**DEADLINE: 31 August 2012**

**COMMENTS: To:**

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## **BACKGROUND**

1. During the last session of CCASIA it was suggested to collect the information on the followings for consideration at the next session:
  - A. National Food Control Systems and Consumer Participation in Food Standards Setting
  - B. The Use of Codex Standards at the National Level
  - C. Nutritional Issues within the Region
  - D. Issues Relevant to the Region
  - E. Status of Implementation of the Strategic Plan for the CCASIA 2009-2014 (Annex 1)
2. In order to assemble and analyse such information more effectively, Japan, as Asian Regional Coordinator, in collaboration with FAO/ WHO and the Codex Secretariat, redesigned and revised the questionnaire. This comprehensive questionnaire includes all the necessary questions for collecting information related to five items, so that survey can be carried out all at once.

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

Governments of the countries of the CCASIA region and international organisations in observer status with Codex are invited to submit the information by answering the questionnaire attached to this Circular Letter, *preferably by e-mail*, not later than **31 August 2012**.

For Questions 1 to 6, please provide update and new initiatives after the last session of CCASIA (November 2010).

When replying to this questionnaire, please indicate the Question number and the option that you chose if you are requested to choose from options. Please note, multiple answers are allowed for the questions to choose options. It is not necessary to reproduce all questions and texts in your reply.

## **Questionnaire**

### **Part A. National Food Control Systems and Consumer Participation in Food Standards Setting**

#### ***Question 1: Strengthening National Food Control Systems***

##### **Q1.1 Structure and organisation of national food control system**

Have your country taken any developments/actions to improve national food regulatory systems? Please write "YES" or "NO". If your answer is "YES", please describe the developments/actions you have taken.

Developments/actions may include development or update of structure and organisation of national food control system including actions relating to: National food law and regulations; food control management e.g. food administration structures, initiatives to improve multi-sectoral collaboration; inspection services; laboratory infrastructure; information dissemination; training etc.

##### **Q1.2 Codex Contact Point and/or National Codex Committee**

Please choose following developments/actions you have taken in your country to strengthen Codex at the national level and promote more effective participation in Codex. If you choose (a), (b) and/or (c), please describe the developments/actions you have taken;

- (a) Strengthening the Codex Contact Point
- (b) Strengthening the National Codex Committee or alternative scheme/framework
- (c) Others
- (d) None

#### ***Question 2: Promotion of Codex Standards and Related Texts***

(For Actions 5.2 of the Strategic Plan for the CCASIA 2009-2014)

Please describe any significant actions that your country has taken to increase awareness on the importance of Codex among relevant stakeholders, including consumers, food industries etc.

#### ***Question 3: Strengthen Communication and Coordination***

(For Actions 2.2, 3.3, 4.4 of the Strategic Plan for the CCASIA 2009-2014)

##### **Q3.1 Use of electronic communication systems**

Please choose the following developments/actions you have taken in your country to optimise the use of electronic communication systems. If you chose any option from (a) to (e), please describe the developments/actions you have taken:

- (a) E-discussions amongst member countries on issues of mutual interest
- (b) Sharing of national positions/written comments on issues of interest to the region
- (c) Development of web page for Codex Contact Point
- (d) Action to promote regional networking among Codex Contact Points to improve communication and share experiences on Codex and related issues
- (e) Others
- (f) None

##### **Q3.2 Participation in Codex activities**

Q3.2.1 Have you submitted relevant and qualified data to FAO/WHO expert bodies? Please write "YES" or "NO". If your answer is "YES," please describe the data you have submitted.

Q3.2.2 Please describe any significant barriers or difficulties that you have experienced in participating in Codex work, including electronic working groups (i.e. technical, financial etc)

Q3.2.3 Please write name of the funding you used during this period for activities related to Codex.

### **Q3.3 Development of network**

Please describe any developments/actions you have taken to establish scientific and technical networks amongst the experts and institutions in the countries of the region.

#### ***Question 4: Training and Capacity Building***

(For Actions 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 4.6, 4.7, 5.1, 5.3 of the Strategic Plan for the CCASIA 2009-2014)

#### **Q4.1 Training programmes/workshops for member countries in the region**

Have you organised or participated in any training programmes/workshops for member countries in the region or provided assistance to member countries in the region related to work of the Codex? Please write "YES" or "NO". If your answer is "YES," please provide name of the training programmes/workshop and the international organisation and/or country that supported the programme/workshops, if any. In addition, please choose from following options that best describe the objective of the each programme and/or assistance.

- (a) To facilitate the development of the scientific and/or technical capacity
- (b) To strengthen food regulatory system
- (c) To strengthen Codex Contact Point and/or National Codex Committee
- (d) To organise on-the-job training for Codex Contact Point to observe the management of Codex Works
- (e) To increase harmonisation of their national legislations with the related Codex standards
- (f) Others (please describe)

#### **Q4.2 Training within the country**

Have you organised any training programme for technical persons and policy makers responsible for the elaboration of food safety policy in your country on the significance of and needs of considering Codex standards and related texts? Please write "YES" or "NO". If your answer is "YES," please describe the outline of training programme with name of supporting international organisation and/or country, if any.

#### **Q4.3 Need for capacity building and training to strengthen the national food control systems**

Q4.3.1 With regard to matters related to national food control systems, please choose from the options below and describe capacity building need.

- (a) Development and/or update of food control systems (e.g. development of HACCP, traceability and recall system, incorporating risk analysis, revision of laws and/or regulations)
- (b) Strengthening implementation of the food regulatory systems, including capacity of inspection and analysis (e.g. enhancing equipment, sampling plan, analytical method and laboratory)
- (c) Enhancing coordination and communication among stakeholders, including consumers, food industries etc.
- (d) Others

Q4.3.2 With regard to matters related to Codex Contact Point and/or National Codex Committee, please describe capacity building need.

### **Part B. The Use of Codex Standards and Related Text at the National Level**

#### ***Question 5: Use of Codex Standards and Related Text at the National Level***

(For Actions 4.5 of the Strategic Plan for the CCASIA 2009-2014)

Q5.1 Have you developed and/or updated national food laws and/or regulations? Please write "YES" or "NO". If your answer is "YES", please write the names of laws and/or regulations and briefly describe the outline of development and/or update.

Q5.2 If your answer above is "YES", did you use Codex standards and related texts as basis for the developments/action? Please write "YES" or "NO". If your answer is "YES", please write name(s) of the Codex Standards and/or related texts you used. If your answer is "NO", please write reasons for not applying Codex standards or difficulty encountered.

Q5.3 Please describe any actions taken in your country to promote the application of risk analysis principles described in the *Working Principles for Risk Analysis for Food Safety for Application by Governments* ([CAC/GL 62-2007](#)).

#### Part C. Nutrition Issues within the Region

##### ***Question 6: Nutrition Issues within the Region***

Please describe any update regarding issues related to nutrition, such as: obesity, overweight, underweight, micronutrient deficiencies and any public health-oriented actions undertaken, including nutrition profiles, nutrition education and the use of nutrition labelling and claims and implementation of the WHO *Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health*.

#### Part D. Issues Relevant to the Region

##### ***Question 7: Issues Relevant to the Region***

(For Actions 3.2, 4.1, 6.2 of the Strategic Plan for the CCASIA 2009-2014)

Please describe up to 10 priority concerns and/or interests that you have related to Codex work currently undertaken or you would like to discuss in the future, and that you wish to share with other members of Asian region. Please include following aspects in your answer:

- Name of subsidiary body that is most relevant to your concern and/or interest;
- Reason for your concern and/or interest;
- Status of work at the subsidiary body; and
- Any actions you wish to have in the work of the subsidiary body in the future.

#### Part E. Others

##### ***Question 8: Implementation of the Regional Strategic Plan***

Q8.1 Of the actions listed in the Regional Strategic Plan what are the priority areas for your country?

Q8.2 Please describe the actions taken in your country to disseminate the Regional Strategic Plan.

Q8.3 What additional support is required to support its effective implementation?

##### ***Question 9: Scientific activities and data collection activities***

Q9.1 Please describe ongoing activities to determine food safety priorities and ensure the scientific basis of food safety decisions.

Q9.2 Please describe key data collection activities ongoing to identify and monitor hazards and contaminants of high priority in the food supply.

Q9.3 Please describe any significant activities related to food monitoring and collection of epidemiological data.

##### ***Question 10: Any Other Matters***

Please provide any other comments you would like to make in any of the areas covered or not covered by the Regional Strategic Plan, if any.

##### ***Question 11: Comments on the format of this questionnaire***

Please provide any comments you would like to make on the format of this consolidated questionnaire which replaces previous questionnaires on those agenda items and includes some new questions.

**Annex****STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR ASIA (CCASIA) - 2009-2014****INTRODUCTION**

The importance of the Asian region in international food trade has long been recognized since more than half of the world population resides in the Asian region. The pace of economic development in these countries is undoubtedly amongst the highest in the world. There has been a significant increase in production of food from this region over the years. In line with this development, the need to produce safe and quality foods cannot be overemphasized. Towards this end, countries in the region have increasingly realized the importance of Codex in protecting the health of the consumers and ensuring fair practices in the food trade. In this regard, the participation of Asia countries in Codex forum has also increased significantly. However, the effectiveness of its member countries participation can still be further improved.

In order to maintain focus and properly coordinate the views of the countries in the region, the Strategic Plan for the CCASIA has been a long time felt need. The Strategic Plan for CCASIA has been formulated consistent with the goals, programme areas and the planned activities of the Strategic Plan being finalized by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The regional strategic plan aims to fulfil amongst others the need for strengthening the national food regulatory system and greater coordination, enable better interaction among member countries and promote harmonization. The Plan also addresses food safety issues that affect the region. Due to the diverse levels of development of countries within the Asian region, the socio-economic status of the population as well as the differences in the regulatory system, the strategic plan has also taken into account the need to extend technical assistance to members to enable them to implement and accomplish the measures as outlined in the Strategic Objectives.

**GOAL**

To strengthen the food safety infrastructure of all member countries of Asia and the region's contribution to the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

<b>Objectives 1: To develop and strengthen national food regulatory system and Codex Contact Point and/or National Codex Committee</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1.1 - To identify capacity-building needs in national food regulatory system and to identify the resources required including funding.	Member countries	2009-2010
1.2 - To organise technical exchange programmes amongst member countries of the region on a mutual basis.	Interested member countries	2009-2014
1.3 - To identify the capacity-building needs of the Codex Contact Points to facilitate and strengthen the implementation and participation in Codex work, and to identify the resources required including funding.	Member countries	2009-2010
1.4 - To assist CCASIA Member Countries in developing and strengthening national food regulatory system and Codex Contact Point and/or National Codex Committee such as mentoring and training programme with the assistance of FAO/WHO and other international organizations.	Member countries with the required capability	Initiate by 2010
1.5 - To organise on-the-job training at Codex Contact Points of member countries to observe structural work programme and implementation processes with the assistance of FAO/WHO and other international organizations.	Member countries with the required capability	Initiate by 2010
1.6 - To conduct national workshops on effective functioning of Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committee.	Interested member countries	2009-2014
1.7 - To conduct regional workshops on effective functioning of Codex Contact Points and National Codex Committee with the support of FAO, WHO and other international organizations.	Coordinator	Initiated by 2010

<b>Objective 2. To strengthen communication &amp; coordination amongst the CCASIA members, with other regions and Codex Secretariat as well as other relevant organizations</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
2.1 - To maintain an up-to-date directory of the National Codex Contact Points of the CCASIA member countries.	Coordinator	Initiate by 2009
2.2 - To optimize the use of electronic communication systems in countries of the region by i) conducting e-discussions amongst member countries on issues of mutual interest from time to time ii) sharing of national positions/written comments on issues of interest to the region on a regular basis iii) encouraging the development of a web page for each contact point iv) promoting regional networking among Codex Contact Points to improve communication and share experiences on Codex and related issues.	Coordinator and member countries	Initiate by 2009
2.3 - To update and maintain a virtual page for CCASIA and to encourage its use.	Interested member countries	Initiate by 2010
<b>Objective 3. To achieve maximum and effective participation of member countries in the activities of CCASIA, Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
3.1 - To organize informal meetings of CCASIA prior to Codex meetings to develop common position, where possible, on issues of interest as well as to update on national and regional activities.	Coordinator	2009-2014
3.2 - To discuss Codex issues of interest to the region including those issues arising from Commission and other Codex subsidiary bodies during CCASIA sessions.	Coordinator and Member countries	2009-2014
3.3 - To seek funding to participate in Codex Meetings and support other Codex activities from "FAO/WHO Project and Fund for Enhancing the Participation of Developing Countries in the Work of Codex", as well as other sources funded by WHO, FAO, UNDP, STDF and other international organizations.	Member countries	2009-2014
<b>Objective 4. To strengthen scientific and technical capacities of member countries in the region</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
4.1 - To identify and prioritize food safety and Codex issues that affect the region and where appropriate seek the assistance of FAO/WHO for scientific advice.	Member countries	2009-2014
4.2 - To develop a list of experts and institutions available in the region which can provide the required scientific/technical expertise.	Coordinator	Complete by 2009
4.3 - To establish e-Working Groups to address prioritized regional issues.	Interested member countries	Initiate by 2010
4.4 - To collate and generate quality data on issues of interest to the region and submit to the Joint FAO/WHO expert bodies and consultation. FAO and WHO to assist countries in this activity in line with the Working Principles for Risk Analysis for Application in the Framework of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.	Lead countries	Initiate by 2010
4.5 - To promote the consistent application of risk analysis principles at the national level.	Member countries	2009-2014
4.6 - To organize and conduct regional workshops/training courses with assistance of FAO/WHO and other international organizations to facilitate the development of the technical capacity of the members of the region including risk analysis.	Facilitating countries	Initiate by 2009
4.7 - To establish scientific and technical networks amongst the experts and institutions in the countries of the region.	Interested member countries	Initiate by 2010
<b>Objective 5. To promote use of Codex standards and related texts as a basis for national legislation</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
5.1 - To train technical personnel and policy makers responsible for the elaboration of food safety policy (including regulations) on the significance of and need to consider Codex standards and related texts, with technical assistance from FAO/WHO.	Member countries	2009
5.2 - To increase awareness on the importance of Codex amongst relevant stakeholders i.e. government, industries, consumers, academia and professional bodies.	Member countries	2009-2014

5.3 - To assist member countries in terms of capacity building to harmonize national legislation with that of Codex with assistance of FAO/WHO and other international organizations.	Member countries	2009-2014
<b>Objective 6. To develop and/or review Codex standards and related texts taking into account regional interests</b>		
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Responsible party</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
6.1 - To convene informal meeting (physical or electronic) to address issues of common interest to the region as and when necessary.	Coordinator on the recommendation of interested member country	2009-2014
6.2 - To identify specific food products of interest to the region that requires standard to be developed in order to protect the health of the consumers and ensure fair practices in food trade	Interested member countries	2009-2014