

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



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Agenda Item 6a

CX/GP 03/19/6

**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES
Nineteenth (Extraordinary) Session
Paris, France, 17 - 21 November 2003**

**REVIEW OF THE GUIDELINES FOR CODEX COMMITTEES - ADVICE TO HOST
COUNTRIES (INCLUDING CRITERIA FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSONS)**

(Prepared by the French Secretariat)

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SECTION 5	Draft Guidelines to host governments of Codex Committees and Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Forces

¹ The rest of the current text has been used in developing the draft guidelines in document CX/GP 03/19/6-Add.1.

Decisions agreed upon at the 26th session of the *Codex alimentarius* Commission (July 2003)

Proposal	33
Codex Document	ALINORM 03/26/11 - Add. 4
Background	<p><i>To develop draft criteria for the appointment of chairpersons of Codex Committees and Task Force. The criteria should recognise the right of the host country to appoint a chairperson.</i></p> <p>178. The Commission agreed in principle to all of the proposals² and referred the work to the Committee on General Principles, requesting it to develop appropriate guidelines and explore further the question of co-chairpersons.</p>

Proposal	31
Codex Document	ALINORM 03/26/11 - Add. 4
Background	<p><i>Separation of advice to Host Governments and advice on the conduct of meetings - To develop two separate texts dealing with these matters separately.</i></p> <p>179. It was noted that the advice on the conduct of meetings should include advice to Chairpersons on the participation of Regional Economic Integration Organizations. In addition, the value of consulting with the Chairpersons of committees and task forces in the preparation of this advice was recognized. The Commission recommended that the advice to host governments should include arrangements for holding Codex sessions in developing countries. Some delegations considered vice-chairing³ arrangements should be considered as an alternative to co-chairmanship, although this was not accepted by other delegations.</p>

² i.e. prop. 31, 33, 34, 35

³ The basis for such an arrangement already exists in the Rules of Procedures : " IX. 10 - *All other officers of subsidiary bodies [i.e. except the chair designated by the host government] shall be elected by the body concerned and shall be eligible for re-election.*" Rule IX. 11 may cover adequately the issues raised by an election of officers by a subsidiary body.

Recommendations to the 19th session of the Codex Committee on General Principles

SECTION 4	Draft criteria for the appointment of chairpersons The Committee is invited to consider the proposal for these criteria.
SECTION 5	Draft Guidelines to host governments of <i>Codex</i> Committees and <i>Ad Hoc</i> Intergovernmental Task Forces The Committee is invited to consider the draft Guidelines.

Draft criteria for the appointment of Chairpersons

By virtue of Article 7 of its Statutes, the Commission may establish such subsidiary bodies as it deems necessary for the accomplishment of its task.

The Members countries, who shall be designated, under Rule IX.10, as responsible for appointing Chairpersons of subsidiary bodies established under Rule IX.1(b)(i) and Rule IX.1(b)(ii) , shall retain the right to appoint a chairperson of their choice.

The following criteria may be considered during the selection of the appointee :

- to be a national⁴ of the member country responsible for appointing the chairperson of the Committee,
- to be a specialist, active in the fields of the subsidiary body concerned⁵,
- insofar as possible, to be able to serve in a continuing capacity,⁶
- to have taken part, in the past, in the work of the *Codex alimentarius* Commission, and/or relevant international, governmental or non-governmental, organizations.
- to be able to analyse technical issues and to communicate clearly both orally and in writing in one of the working languages of the Commission,
- to exercise tact and sensitivity to issues of particular importance to member countries.
- not to engage and/or not to have engaged in activities which could give rise to a conflict of interests on any item on the agenda of the Committee.

⁴ See, the current "*Guidelines for Codex Committees and ad hoc intergovernmental Task Forces - Organization and duties - Chair*" (para. 4 - p. 47)

⁵ see Rule IX 4 (Subsidiary bodies) - p. 14

⁶ see Rule IX 4 (Subsidiary bodies) - p. 14

Draft Guidelines to host governments of Codex Committees and Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Forces

INTRODUCTION

By virtue of Article 7 of the Statutes of the *Codex alimentarius* Commission and Rule IX.1(b) of its Rules of Procedure, the Commission has established a number of Codex Committees and *ad hoc* Intergovernmental Task Forces to prepare standards in accordance with the Procedure for the Elaboration of Codex Standards and Coordinating Committees to exercise general coordination of its work in specific regions or groups of countries. The Rules of Procedure of the Commission shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to Codex Committees, Coordinating Committees and *ad hoc* Intergovernmental Task Forces. The Guidelines applying to Codex Committees, as described in this Section, apply also to Regional Coordinating Committees and to Codex *ad hoc* Intergovernmental Task Forces.

COMPOSITION OF CODEX COMMITTEES

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of Codex Committees is open to Members of the Commission who have notified the Director-General of FAO or WHO of their desire to be considered as members thereof or to selected members designated by the Commission. Membership of Regional Coordinating Committees is open only to Members of the Commission belonging to the region or group of countries concerned.

OBSERVERS

Any other Member of the Commission or any Member or Associate Member of FAO or WHO which has not become a Member of the Commission may participate as an observer at any Codex Committee if it has notified the Director-General of FAO or WHO of its wish to do so. Such countries may participate fully in the discussions of the Committee and shall be provided with the same opportunities as other Members to express their point of view (including the submission of memoranda), but without the right to vote or to move motions either of substance or of procedure. International organizations which have formal relations with either FAO or WHO should also be invited to attend in an observer capacity sessions of those Codex Committees which are of interest to them.

ORGANIZATION AND DUTIES

CHAIR

The *Codex alimentarius* Commission will designate a member country of the Commission, which has indicated its willingness to accept financial and all other responsibility, as having responsibility for appointing a chairperson of the Committee. The member country concerned is responsible for appointing the chairperson of the Committee from among its own nationals. Should this person for any reason be unable to take the chair, the member country concerned shall designate another person to perform the functions of the chairperson for as long as the

chairperson is unable to do so. A Committee may appoint at any session one or more rapporteurs from among the delegates present.

SECRETARIAT

A member country to which a Codex Committee has been assigned is responsible for providing all conference services including the secretariat. The secretariat should have adequate administrative support staff able to work easily in the languages used at the session and should have at its disposal adequate word processing and document reproducing equipment. Interpretation, preferably simultaneous, should be provided from and into all languages used at the session, and if the report of the session is to be adopted in more than one of the working languages of the Committee, then the services of a translator should be available. The Committee secretariat and the Joint FAO/WHO (Codex) Secretariat are charged with the preparation of the draft report in consultation with the rapporteurs, if any.

DUTIES AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The duties of a Codex Committee shall include:

- (a) the drawing up of a list of priorities as appropriate, among the subjects and products within its terms of reference,
- (b) consideration of the types of safety and quality elements (or recommendations) to be covered, whether in standards for general application or in reference to specific food products,
- (c) consideration of the types of product to be covered by standards, e.g., whether materials for further processing into food should be covered,
- (d) preparation of draft Codex standards within its terms of reference,
- (e) reporting to each session of the Commission on the progress of its work and, where necessary, on any difficulties caused by its terms of reference, together with suggestions for their amendment.
- (f) the review and, as necessary, revision of existing standards and related texts on a scheduled, periodic basis to ensure that the standards and related texts within its terms of reference are consistent with current scientific knowledge and other relevant information.

SESSIONS

PLACE

A member country to which a Codex Committee has been assigned is consulted by the Directors-general of FAO and WHO before they determine where a session of this Committee shall be convened.

The member country should consider arrangements for holding Codex sessions in developing countries.

INVITATIONS AND PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Sessions of Codex Committees and Coordinating Committees will be convened by the Directors-General of FAO and WHO in consultation with the chairperson of the respective Codex Committee. The letter of invitation and provisional agenda shall be prepared by the Chief, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, FAO, Rome, in consultation with the chairperson of

the Committee for issue by the Directors-General to all Members and Associate Members of FAO and WHO or, in the case of Coordinating Committees, to the countries of the region or group of countries concerned, Codex Contact Points and interested international organizations in accordance with the official mailing lists of FAO and WHO. Chairpersons should, before finalizing the drafts, inform and consult with the national Codex Contact Point where one has been established, and, if necessary, obtain clearance from the national authorities concerned (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, or as the case may be). The invitation and Provisional Agenda will be translated and distributed by FAO/WHO in the working languages of the Commission at least four months before the date of the meeting.

Invitations should include the following:

- (a) title of the Codex Committee,
- (b) time and date of opening and date of closing of the session,
- (c) place of the session,
- (d) languages to be used and arrangements for interpretation, i.e., whether simultaneous or not,
- (e) if appropriate, information on hotel accommodation,
- (f) request for the names of the chief delegate and other members of the delegation, and for information on whether the chief delegate of a government will be attending as a representative or in the capacity of an observer.

Replies to invitations will normally be requested to be sent to reach the chairperson as early as possible and in any case not less than 30 days before the session. A copy should be sent also to the Chief, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, FAO, Rome. It is of the utmost importance that by the date requested a reply to invitations should be sent by all those governments and international organizations which intend to participate. The reply should specify the number of copies and the language of the documents required.

The Provisional Agenda should state the time, date and place of the meeting and should include the following items:

- (a) adoption of the agenda,
- (b) if considered necessary, election of rapporteurs,
- (c) items relating to subject matter to be discussed, including, where appropriate, the step in the Commission's Procedure for the Elaboration of Standards at which the item is being dealt with at the session. There should also be reference to the Committee papers relevant to the item,
- (d) any other business,
- (e) consideration of date and place of next session,
- (f) adoption of draft report.

The work of the Committee and the length of the meeting should be so arranged as to leave

sufficient time at the end of the session for a report of the Committee's transactions to be agreed.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

A Codex or Coordinating Committee may assign specific tasks to countries, groups of countries or to international organizations represented at meetings of the Committee and may ask member countries and international organizations for views on specific points.

Ad hoc working groups established to accomplish specific tasks shall be disbanded once the tasks have been accomplished as determined by the Committee.

A Codex or Coordinating Committee may not set up standing sub-committees, whether open to all Members of the Commission or not, without the specific approval of the Commission.

PREPARATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF PAPERS

Papers for a session should be sent by the chairperson of the Codex Committee concerned at least two months before the opening of the session to the following:

- (i) all Codex Contact Points,
- (ii) chief delegates of member countries, of observer countries and of international organizations, and
- (iii) other participants on the basis of replies received. Twenty copies of all papers in each of the languages used in the Committee concerned should be sent to the Chief, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, FAO, Rome.

Papers for a session prepared by participants must be drafted in one of the working languages of the Commission, which should, if possible, be one of the languages used in the Codex Committee concerned. These papers should be sent to the chairperson of the Committee, with a copy to the Chief, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, FAO, Rome, in good time to be included in the distribution of papers for the session.

Documents circulated at a session of a Codex Committee other than draft documents prepared at the session and ultimately issued in a final form, should subsequently receive the same distribution as other papers prepared for the Committee.

Codex Contact Points will be responsible for ensuring that papers⁷ are circulated to those concerned within their own country and for ensuring that all necessary action is taken by the date specified.

Consecutive reference numbers in suitable series should be assigned to all documents of Codex Committees. The reference number should appear at the top right-hand corner of the first page together with a statement of the language in which the document was prepared and the date of its preparation. A clear statement should be made of the provenance (origin or author country) of the paper immediately under the title. The text should be divided into numbered paragraphs. At the end of these guidelines is a series of references for Codex documents adopted by the *Codex alimentarius* Commission for its own sessions and those of its subsidiary bodies.

Members of the Codex Committees should advise the Committee chairperson through their

⁷ See Uniform System of References for Codex Documents – p. 74 of the Procedural Manual.

Codex Contact Point of the number of copies of documents normally required.

Working papers of Codex Committees may be circulated freely to all those assisting a delegation in preparing for the business of the Committee; they should not, however, be published. There is, however, no objection to the publication of reports of the meetings of Committees or of completed draft standards.