

# CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy - Tel: (+39) 06 57051 - E-mail: [codex@fao.org](mailto:codex@fao.org) - [www.codexalimentarius.org](http://www.codexalimentarius.org)

Agenda Item 4.2

CX/EXEC 23/84/5

## JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

Eighty-fourth Session  
CICG, Geneva, Switzerland  
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### CODEX STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2031 -

#### TIMETABLE AND PROCESS; ESTABLISHING A FRAMEWORK

(Prepared by the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Codex Alimentarius Commission with the Codex Secretariat)

## 1. Introduction

The current Codex Strategic Plan covers a six-year period (2020 to 2025 inclusive) aiming to advance the mandate of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) by presenting the:

- vision;
- mission;
- core values;
- goals and objectives; and
- specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) indicators.

In this document, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CVCs) and Codex Secretariat propose a structure for the Codex Strategic Plan for 2026 to 2031 (inclusive) and a timetable and process for its elaboration. The structure will consist of the strategic plan itself (Section 2.1), the monitoring framework (Section 2.2), and implementation work plans (Section 2.3) each with its own ownership and timetable. In section 3, the process and governance are presented and in section 4 a detailed timetable.

With the goal of delivering a new strategic plan, a monitoring framework, and implementation work plans in advance of 1 January 2026 (the date the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 will come into effect), a process is proposed that:

- is inclusive and fully engages Members;
- facilitates value-adding discussions at the Commission; and
- ensures appropriate ownership of each element of the plan and governance of the process.

The views of the Executive Committee on these matters are sought, noting that "...the Executive Committee may make proposals to the Commission regarding general orientation, strategic planning, and programming of the work of the Commission...".<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Structure of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031

### 2.1 The strategic plan

It is proposed that the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 itself consists of:

- a. **Vision, mission, core values** – all of which would remain unchanged from the current strategic plan, subject to endorsement by CAC.
- b. **A narrative on drivers for change**, including but not limited to FAO and WHO food safety strategies and priorities and the SPS Declaration for WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference, also

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<sup>1</sup> Rules of Procedure of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. Rule V.2 – Executive Committee.

noting the within the timeframe of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 the target date for achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be reached.

- i. The Codex Secretariat would lead drafting this section, with input from FAO, WHO and others across the multilateral system, as needed.
  - ii. The report of the work of the CCEXEC subcommittee on a blueprint for the future of Codex, due to be concluded at CCEXEC84, will also provide an input.
- c. **A statement on the role of Codex in addressing the challenges and opportunities posed by these drivers** developed with and agreed by Members.
- i. The work to date on a blueprint for the future of Codex has helped define the scope of Members' ambitions.
  - ii. Responses from external stakeholders to the CVCs' invitation to provide their views may give further insights.
  - iii. Informed by these inputs, a starting point for the discussion on the role of Codex in addressing the challenges and opportunities posed by these drivers could be to set out common themes and approaches. These could stem from work ongoing or completed by Codex or FAO/WHO and which relates to food systems transformation, for example:
    - Activities in FAO and WHO on food systems innovations and on foodborne disease trends and drivers which might inform prioritisation discussions, such as FAO's work on foresight<sup>2</sup> and WHO's work on the burden of foodborne disease<sup>3</sup>;
    - Taking into consideration global impacts when prioritizing work – for example recognising that work to set limits for residues of environmental inhibitors in milk would not only protect consumer health and facilitate fair food trade practices, but also remove a potential blocker to the adoption of this technology and the environmental benefit it could deliver; and
    - With the purpose of the Codex Alimentarius, namely consumer health protection and ensuring fair practices in the food trade, remaining paramount, while any broader issues relating to the subject of a Codex standard will be flagged through appropriate channels, including through FAO and WHO as partners in the Quadripartite on One Health.
- d. **A high-level description of Codex ways of working.** The five strategic goals in the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 cover all Codex areas of work, are reasonably progressive, and were agreed by CAC in 2019. These may be kept, or amended as Members decide.
- e. **A results chain reflecting best practices following a Goal-Outcome-Output format,** with the strategic outcomes describing the ways of working that support progress towards achieving the strategic goals.
- f. **The Strategic Outcomes that Codex should aim to achieve by 2031,** relating for example to the benefits that standards drive in terms of trade and improvement of livelihoods in developing and emerging economies, or the impacts of food standards on promoting consumer health and fair food trade practices.

Ownership of this first part of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 package should sit with CAC, with content developed iteratively with Members and Observers. The Secretariat would facilitate the drafting of the new SP, based on inputs from Members and Observers.

## 2.2 A monitoring framework

The monitoring framework would be based on the revised monitoring framework<sup>4</sup> presented at CCEXEC84 including SMART indicators.

<sup>2</sup> [Thinking about the future of food safety \(fao.org\)](https://www.fao.org)

<sup>3</sup> [Estimating the burden of foodborne diseases \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int)

<sup>4</sup> CX/EXEC 23/84/4

CAC45 has agreed that this framework should be developed in parallel with and should inform the finalization of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031.<sup>5</sup>

Ownership of the monitoring framework should sit with CAC, and responsibility for drafting should sit with the Codex Secretariat.

### 2.3 Implementation work plans

The implementation work plans would set out activities that would allow Codex to make progress towards the strategic outcomes set out in the strategy.

This should have a dispersed ownership. As for the current strategic plan, each of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees will be asked to develop and at subsequent meetings review a regional implementation work plan. The work of the Secretariat to support implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 would be an integral part of its annual work, which is embedded in the FAO strategic planning process, as the budgetary resources are collected and administered by FAO.

Observers and other Codex actors may propose relevant work plans where they contribute towards Codex objectives.

## 3. Process and governance

Although the process for development of the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 was applauded by Members as an inclusive one<sup>6</sup>, the shared reflection of the CVCs and the Codex Secretariat is that the subsequent experience with new virtual tools and meeting formats would permit a process that is even more inclusive of Members and Observers.

Given the timetable proposed in this paper, such a process would need to focus on inclusive discussions on those elements of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 where they would be likely to add most value. It is therefore proposed that discussions with Members should focus on:

- Section 2.1, c: Statement on the role of Codex in addressing the challenges and opportunities posed by drivers of change.
- Section 2.1, f: Outcomes that Codex should aim to achieve by 2031.

The process for development of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 will also need appropriate governance. The model followed for the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025 was for iterative development of the plan to be undertaken by a subcommittee of CCEXEC, open to all its Members and chaired by a Vice-Chairperson of CAC. The shared reflection of the CVCs and Secretariat is that, given the clear structure and more inclusive process proposed for the Strategic Plan 2026-2031, the proposed carryover of key elements from the Codex Strategic Plan 2020-2025, and the benefits of sharing the workload between CVCs rather than loading a single Vice-Chairperson, a different approach to governance is warranted.

It is therefore proposed that:

- a. CCEXEC84, informed by the proposals in this paper, agrees on the timetable, process, governance and framework for the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031;
- b. The CVCs, supported by the Codex Secretariat, take responsibility for developing the elements of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 in consultation with Members and Observers, to the timetable agreed by CCEXEC84;<sup>7</sup> and
- c. CCEXEC85 (November 2023), CCEXEC86 (July 2024) and CCEXEC87 (tentatively November 2024) each include an agenda item on development of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 at which the CVCs report and are accountable to CCEXEC for activities undertaken and for the development of content of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031.

## 4. A detailed timetable

Recalling the ambition (section 1) to deliver a strategic plan, a monitoring framework, and implementation work plans in advance of 1 January 2026, and allowing time for development of

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<sup>5</sup> REP22/CAC, Paragraph 187(vi)

<sup>6</sup> REP19/CAC, Paragraph 114

<sup>7</sup> Consistent with the function of CVCs as set out in Rule III.2 of the Procedural Manual to “exercise such other function as may be required to facilitate the work of the Commission”

implementation work plans following adoption of the text of the strategic plan, this argues for adoption of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 at CAC47 in November 2024. This will also allow to make use of the next round of Coordinating Committee meetings, the majority of which will be held in 2025, with probably two already in 2024, for implementation work planning.

This then provides us with seventeen months from CCEXEC84 to develop and adopt the Strategic Plan 2026-2031.

This is a realistic and achievable timetable, given the proposals in this paper to carry forward into the next strategic plan the most durable elements of the current strategic plan – vision, mission, core values, and ways of working.

The following schedule of work is proposed:

When	What	Who
07/2023	Agree the timetable, process, governance and framework for the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031.	CCEXEC84
07/2023 – 11/2023	(i) Lead engagement and discussion with Members and Observers on a clear statement on the role of Codex in addressing the challenges and opportunities posed by drivers of change; This will be done through the discussion on the Future of Codex where a section on the drivers of change is included; and  (ii) Develop a first draft of the following elements of the strategic plan: vision; mission; core values; drivers for change; ways of working.	CVCs, Codex Secretariat
11/2023	Review the intersessional work undertaken by CVCs and the Codex Secretariat, adjust the schedule for the development of the Strategic Plan 2026-2031 as needed, and make recommendations to CAC46.	CCEXEC85
	Discuss and adopt (with square-bracketed text as needed) a draft of the following elements of the strategic plan: vision; mission; core values; drivers for change; the role of Codex; ways of working.	CAC46
01/2024 – 06/2024	Lead a round of engagement and discussion with Members and Observers  (i) to resolve any pending issue (square-bracketed text remaining) following discussion at CAC46; and  (ii) on outcomes that Codex should aim to achieve by 2031, in parallel with which the Codex Secretariat initiates work on a monitoring framework.	CVCs, Codex Secretariat
07/2024	Review the intersessional work undertaken by CVCs and the Codex Secretariat and adjusts the work plan as needed.	CCEXEC86
07/2024 – 11/2024	Lead a second round of engagement and discussion with Members and Observers on outcomes that Codex should aim to achieve by 2031, in parallel with which the Codex Secretariat completes work on a monitoring framework.	CVCs, Codex Secretariat
11/2024 11/2024	Review the intersessional work undertaken by CVCs and the Codex Secretariat and makes recommendations to CAC47.	CCEXEC87
	Discuss and adopt the strategic plan with its monitoring framework.	CAC47
Through 2025 and into 2026	Development of implementation work plans	FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees  Other actors
01/2026	Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031 comes into operation.	

## **5. Summary and recommendations**

The CVCs and the Codex Secretariat propose that CCEXEC84:

- a. initiates work on the development of a Codex Strategic Plan for the period 2026 to 2031 with accompanying monitoring framework and implementation work plans; and
- b. having considered the proposals made in this paper, also agrees on:
  - the structure of the strategic plan;
  - the process for development of the Codex Strategic Plan 2026-2031, and governance of the process; and
  - a timetable for development of the Strategic Plan 2026-2031 and its monitoring framework, and implementation work plans.