

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION **E**



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



**World Health
Organization**

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REP15/AFRICA

**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION**
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**REPORT OF THE TWENTY FIRST SESSION OF THE
FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA**
Yaoundé, Cameroon
27 - 30 January 2015

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Summary and Conclusions	page iii
Report of the 21st Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa	page 1
Summary Status of Work	page 9
	Paragraph
Introduction	1
Opening of the Session	2 - 4
Adoption of the Agenda (Agenda Item 1)	5 - 6
Matters referred by the Codex Alimentarius Commission and other Codex Committees (Agenda Item 2)	7 – 10
FAO and WHO activities relevant to the region, identifying priorities and capacity development needs (Agenda Item 3)	
FAO and WHO activities and regional priorities	11 - 17
Successor Initiative to the Codex Trust Fund)	18 - 21
Conclusions	22 - 25
Revitalisation of FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees - Proposals on strengthening the role and platform of RCCS (Agenda Item 4)	26 - 37
Comments and information on National Food Control Systems, Consumer participation in food Standards setting and the use of Codex Standards at the national level (Agenda Item 5)	38 - 40
Strategic Plan for CCAFRICA (Agenda Item 6)	41 - 54
Discussion Paper on the development of Regional Standards (Agenda Item 7)	55 - 68
Guidelines for the submission of candidature from Africa for positions of responsibility at the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its Subsidiary Bodies (Agenda Item 8)	69 - 73
Codex work relevant to the Region (Agenda Item 9)	74 - 76
Nomination of Coordinator (Agenda Item 10)	77 - 78
Other Business and Future Work (Agenda Item 11)	
Update on the progress of development of the definition for Biofortification of foods	79 - 80
Date and Place of the Next Session of the Committee	81

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix I:	List of Participants	10
Appendix II:	Proposal for New Work on Africa Regional Standard for Dried Meat	17
Appendix III:	Proposal for New Work on Africa Regional Standard for fermented cooked Cassava (<i>Manihot</i> spp.) based products	20
Appendix IV:	Proposal for New Work on Africa Regional Standard for Shea Butter	24
Appendix V:	Proposal for New Work on Africa Regional Standard for <i>Gnetum</i> Spp. Leaves..	27

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Twenty first Session of the Codex Coordinating Committee for Africa reached the following conclusions:

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE 38TH SESSION OF THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND BY THE 68TH SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Coordinating Committee:

- Agreed on the need for revitalisation of RCCs and made comments on several proposals for the revitalisation (para 30, 32, 34)
- Unanimously agreed to recommend that Kenya be appointed as Regional Coordinator for Africa (para 78).
- Agreed to propose new work for development of regional standards on the following 4 products: Dried meat; fermented cooked cassava based products; Shea butter and *Gnetum* spp leaves (para 61, 63, 65, 66);

OTHER MATTERS

The Coordinating Committee:

- Noted matters arising from the 36th and 37th Session of the Commission (para 7);
- Expressed appreciation to FAO and WHO for their work in the area of capacity building and scientific advice and the support provided through the Codex Trust Fund (para. 22, 23, 24);
- Agreed to adopt a new strategic plan for CCAFRICA (2014 – 2019) (para 53);
- Agreed to internally maintain and further develop the guidelines for the submission of candidature from Africa for Positions of responsibility at the Commission and its subsidiary bodies (para 72).
- Noted the information on the progress towards the development of the definition for biofortification (para 80);

INTRODUCTION

1. The FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) held its 21st Session in Yaoundé Cameroon from 27 to 30 January 2015 at the kind invitation of the Government of Cameroon. The Session was chaired by Mr. Médi Mougui, Deputy Permanent Representative to FAO of Cameroon and was attended by delegates from 26 Member countries, 3 Member countries from outside the Region, 1 Member Organization, 5 international organizations and Representatives of FAO and WHO. A complete list of participants, including the Secretariat, is given in Appendix I to this report.

OPENING OF THE SESSION¹

2. Mr. Emmanuel Bonde the Minister for Mines, Industry and Technological Development opened the session on behalf of the Prime Minister. In his speech, he reiterated the need to transform food supply systems including production, processing; storage and distribution to reduce the cost of malnutrition in Africa. He underscored the importance of Codex Standards in supporting agricultural transformation, consumer protection and fair trade. He expressed optimism that the outcome of the discussions of CCAFRICA21 would contribute to the improvement of the health situation in Africa and the world at large. He finally thanked FAO and WHO for their continued support to the work of Codex and expressed Cameroon's Commitment to continued participation in the work of Codex.
3. Mr. Charles Booto à Ngon, coordinator CCAFRICA, welcomed the delegates and noted that participation of Africa in Codex work is a must which called for joint action. In this regard, he expressed Cameroon's commitment to supporting the work of Codex.
4. Mr. Tsimi Evouna Gilbert, the representative of the Cameroon Government delegate; Ms Awilo Ochieng Pernet, Chairperson of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, Dr. Charlotte Faty Ndiaye, WHO Representative in Cameroon; Mr Dan Rugabira, the FAO Sub-Regional Coordinator for Central Africa, also addressed the Session.

The Opening remarks and speeches are presented in [CRD 9](#).

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda Item 1)²

5. The Coordinating Committee adopted the Provisional Agenda as its Agenda for the Session and agreed to consider the following issue under Agenda Item 11 – Other Business
 - Update on the Progress of development of the definition for Biofortification of foods - IFPRI
6. The Committee also agreed to establish two in-session working groups to consider Agenda Items 6 & 7.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND OTHER CODEX COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES (Agenda Item 2)³

7. The Coordinating Committee noted matters arising from the 36th and 37th Sessions of the Commission and also noted the framework for the Monitoring of the Codex Strategic Plan was developed by the Codex Secretariat as contained in [CRD1](#).
8. The delegation of South Africa noted that the Monitoring framework would be beneficial in the development of the strategic plan for Africa.
9. The Codex Secretariat clarified that the monitoring framework contained in [CRD1](#) was developed in order to assist Codex Committees to update the Commission on the progress of Implementation of the Codex Strategic Plan. The Secretariat further pointed out that those Regional Coordinating Committees that develop their own strategic plan, would not need to respond to the questions set out in [CRD1](#), however they would have to demonstrate linkages of their Regional Strategic Plan to the Codex Strategic Plan.
10. With regard to CCSCH, the Committee noted that India as host Government of CCSCH had invited Nigeria to start negotiations regarding co-hosting a future session of CCSCH.

FAO/WHO ACTIVITIES RELEVANT TO THE REGION, IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS (Agenda Item 3)⁴

a. FAO and WHO activities and regional priorities

¹ [CRD 9](#) (Opening speeches)

² [CX/AFRICA 15/21/1](#); [CRD 7](#) (Comments of Rwanda)

³ [CX/AFRICA 15/21/2](#); [CRD 1](#) (Monitoring of Codex Strategic Plan)

⁴ [CX/AFRICA/15/21/3](#); [CX/AFRICA/15/21/3-Add.1](#); [CRD 2](#) (Comments of Cameroon, Kenya and Morocco); [CRD 6](#) (Comments of Ghana and Nigeria); [CRD 11](#) (Report of the FAO/WHO Introductory Training Workshop on risk communication)

11. The Representative of FAO introduced documents [CX/AFRICA/15/21/3](#), on Codex related capacity building activities and the provision of scientific advice performed by FAO and WHO. He drew the attention of the Committee to the work undertaken by both FAO and WHO at regional level, global initiatives and activities funded under the Codex Trust Fund.
12. He gave an overview of completed or ongoing technical capacity development activities in the region, existing challenges that require further assistance and the priorities that have been identified for the region for the coming biennium including, among others: improving food safety policy coordination at the national level, providing expertise in drafting laws and other regulatory texts, and supporting national Codex programmes.
13. The Representative of WHO informed the Committee that the World Health Day 2015 (WHD) will have as its theme "**How safe is your food? From farm-to-plate, make food safe**", and urged member states to take advantage of the anticipated publicity. Specifically, it was proposed that during World Health Day governments could improve food safety through public awareness campaigns, and encourage consumers to ensure that the food on their plates is safe.
14. Members expressed their sincere gratitude towards FAO and WHO for their capacity building efforts, expressing a strong wish for them to continue. Many members agreed with the list of priorities as set out, but proposed a different order of importance, based on the situation in their particular country.
15. The Delegation of Kenya supported by South Africa, proposed that information related to Codex capacity building programmes and training should in future be channeled through the Codex Contact Point and that training materials be posted on the website for ease of access to all.
16. The Representative of FAO concluded that the list of priorities as presented in CX/AFRICA/15/21/3 had been adequate, and noted that the order of priorities will vary between countries. He noted that the following actions seemed to be those most often called for in the interventions: improving coordination of food safety policies between members in the region; providing expertise in enacting national food safety policies and regulations; promoting risk-based food inspection and the use of the risk analysis framework when establishing food safety policies; and establishing ways for helping small and medium size enterprises implement preventive approaches to food safety. He encouraged member countries to ensure that identified priorities at country level are included in the Country Program Framework (CPF) negotiated between FAO and member countries and in which all priority work is highlighted. With respect to concerns raised he emphasized the importance to be systematic in including the CCPs in the information list when training and workshops are organized in the country.
17. The Representative of WHO noted that member states feedback indicated their willingness to showcase WHD 2015 and encouraged members to collaborate with a wider range of local partners including public and private sectors, UN agencies, NGOs and consumer groups to achieve this goal. In line with this he encouraged members to develop national strategies to celebrate the event and to submit them through their WHO country office to the WHO Regional Office. He further encouraged members to regularly visit the WHD 2015 website (www.who.int/campaigns/world-health-day/2015) to receive regular updates on the toolkit for WHD 2015.

Successor initiative to the Codex Trust Fund

18. The Administrator of the FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund updated delegates on the status of discussions on the design and development of the successor initiative. These discussions would continue to take into consideration the inputs from the FAO/WHO regional coordinating committees, as well as the findings and recommendations of the final project evaluation which would appear in the final report scheduled for March 2015. She highlighted that three changes were being contemplated in the design of the successor initiative: 1) a change in approach that would move from a one-size fits all approach to a targeted approach; 2) a change in focus to concentrate more at the country level through the provision of multi-year support to assist countries to identify and achieve their desired level of engagement in Codex; 3) a change in the way support might be provided, including exploring new mechanisms such as twinning/partnering to allow for countries to learn from others. The Administrator highlighted that the situation of participation in CCAFRICA indicated that there were still challenges to countries participating fully and effectively in Codex without reliance on external support. She requested input from CCAFRICA members on what these challenges were, how they could best be addressed, and what specific role a successor initiative could play in addressing these challenges.
19. The Chair requested CCAFRICA member states to focus their input on providing new elements to what already appeared in the documentation. In their interventions, CCAFRICA members stated that a more tailored approach was welcomed, and that this should be linked to needs and priorities. Member states highlighted: the need to retain some element of support for physical participation, possibly through mechanisms such as cost-sharing; the need to support awareness-raising of the importance of Codex at the

highest levels, and the importance of using World Health Day 2015 on Food Safety for this purpose; the need to look at having transition measures to allow countries to understand and prepare for their engagement with the successor initiative; the need to support capacity development in bringing the scientific and technical input into the Codex process. A proposal was made on the use of basic eligibility criteria similar to those used by the current Codex Trust Fund, and the possible inclusion of a criterion that examined e.g. the frequency of technical participation in Codex technical committees. It was pointed out that new options to fund the successor initiative would need to be sought.

20. The Administrator of the Codex Trust Fund welcomed these ideas and inputs which were aligned with the direction that the design and development of the successor initiative was taking. The WHO regional representative called attention to how data collection might be strengthened in countries and cited the example of how WHO was supporting the surveillance of anti-microbial resistance in some countries.
21. The Codex Secretariat informed the Committee on updates that will be made to the Codex website to support electronic working groups, online commenting and regional websites. The Secretariat said that Codex Contact points would be the main focal points for the use of these systems such as for the already operational online registration system and that it was the intention of the Secretariat to prepare a survey on the capacity of all contact points with regard to sufficient and reliable access to internet and equipment in order to be able to use the new systems.

Conclusion

22. The Committee expressed its appreciation to FAO and WHO for their support in building capacity in the region including the Pre-session Introductory Training Workshop on Risk Communication which was very informative ([CRD 11](#)) and agreed with the priorities as set for 2015. The Committee also noted that countries have their own priorities and these should be taken into consideration during planning for the 2015.
23. The Committee strongly supported the progress made on the development of the CTF successor initiative, agreed with the preliminary ideas put forward in the relevant document and looked forward to the final report of the Codex Trust Fund evaluation.
24. The Committee also noted that support had been expressed for the review of criteria for eligibility; possible cost-sharing as a mechanism to continue to support physical participation; and a scheme to support transition from the current Codex Trust Fund to the successor initiative.
25. On celebrations for the World Health Day 2015, the Committee appreciated the information provided, including the theme as stated in paragraph 13, and encouraged every CCAFRICA member to prepare and forward a programme to WHO for marking this day.

REVITALISATION OF FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEES - PROPOSALS ON STRENGTHENING THE ROLE AND PLATFORM OF RCCs (Agenda Item 4)⁵

26. The Codex Secretariat gave a general introduction to the document CX/AFRICA 15/21/4 noting that the present Terms of Reference (TOR) of the RCC fell under the two main categories i.e: (1) supporting and enriching the standard setting and related work of the Commission from the region and (2) supporting the work of FAO and WHO in the region as regards capacity building. These committees were very rich resources for the Codex system, however the context in which they work had changed over the years e.g. the regional FAO/WHO Food safety conferences had been discontinued. The document developed in cooperation between the Codex Secretariat, FAO and WHO, intended to start a process with members to identify how discussions at RCC could best feed into the CODEX global process and strategies concerning food standards setting and also into the FAO and WHO global and regional strategies concerning capacity development on food quality and safety. RCC had the potential to become the primary food safety event in the region, to discuss food safety and quality issues, and exchange information.
27. The Representative of FAO, speaking on behalf of FAO and WHO, noted the good work of FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees (RCC) while also mentioning some of the challenges such as: duplication of the global strategic plan in regional plans; limited information sharing due to low response rate to CL; and development of too rigid regional positions limiting negotiation flexibility in CAC. She introduced the proposals presented in the document, which are intended to address the challenges and make RCC meetings more dynamic.
28. The Committee noted that regional positions were important as they helped to identify local issues.

Proposal 3.1

⁵ [CX/AFRICA/15/21/4](#); [CX/AFRICA/15/21/4-add.1](#); [CRD 2](#) (Comments of Cameroon, Kenya and Morocco); [CRD 6](#) (Comments of Ghana and Nigeria); [CRD 7](#) (Comments of Rwanda); [CRD 8](#) (Comments of Cameroon and South Sudan)

29. Four proposed standing items for RCC, as a means to ensure their alignment, were introduced. Feedback was requested from countries on whether they would support information sharing and discussions on current key issues and challenges, as well as on emerging issues and capacity development needs and programming. A keynote address as a support for focused discussion to identify priorities and challenges was proposed. Monitoring the global strategic plan as it relates to the work of the RCC was introduced as a third standing item for the agenda. Finally a discussion on food standards in the region was also proposed.

30. The Committee agreed with the proposed standing agenda items presented under proposal 3.1.

Proposal 3.2

31. The Representative of FAO introduced proposal 3.2. and pointed out that given the relatively low response rate to CL, an alternative mechanism to support information collection and sharing was proposed, as a means to enable meaningful discussions under the newly proposed standing agenda items. The compilation of replies to the circular letters on food control systems could be replaced by an analysis produced by the Codex secretariat, FAO and WHO, on the basis of a living database supported by countries technical contributions. A preliminary template ([CX/AFRICA 15/21/4-Add.1](#)) for the collection of information was also introduced.

32. The Committee supported the development of the online platform which should be user friendly, accessible and allow easy and ongoing upload of data by the Contact Points to enable the Secretariat to make a summary of available data. One delegation noted the challenge of regular updating of data by members and proposed to explore how to motivate members to undertake this activity, and proposed that this element might be considered by the Codex Trust Fund as a pre-condition for granting support to countries.

Proposal 3.3

33. The Representative of FAO reminded delegates on the importance to find a mechanism to better identify the needs and priorities for improved targeting of FAO/WHO capacity development and scientific advice programmes, as well as for the Codex processes. A proposal was made for countries, as well as for FAO and WHO, to submit information on emerging issues with sufficient advance so that the Codex secretariat could compile a summary paper for review by the RCC.

34. The Committee agreed with the proposals as set out in the document.

Proposal 3.4

35. The Representative of FAO introduced the section on regional strategic planning, proposing RCC to monitor their contribution to the global Codex strategic plan. For existing regional strategic plans, it was proposed to ensure that they should align with the global strategic plan and share the same timeframe.

36. The Committee agreed to continue developing a regional strategic plan as it would take into account regional needs.

37. The Committee also agreed that the regional strategic plan should be aligned with the global strategic plan in terms of content and timelines in order to ensure complementarity.

COMMENTS AND INFORMATION ON NATIONAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEMS, CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN FOOD STANDARDS SETTING AND THE USE OF CODEX STANDARDS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL (replies to CL 2014/29-CCAFRICA) (Agenda item 5)⁶

38. The delegation of Cameroon briefly presented the document containing the replies to CL 2014/29-AFRICA received from 12 countries. The Delegation noted that despite the existing challenges, there had been slight improvements reported in a number of areas, such as coordination, legislation, infrastructure development, training and awareness. The Delegation further noted that the priority areas for intervention include the following: sensitisation of policy makers and all stakeholders in the food value chains; training of technical personnel; and laboratory infrastructure.

39. One delegation intervened that the CL in its present form did not enable proper analysis of the information provided by members and therefore proposed that any further discussions on this matter be deferred.

40. In light of the discussion held under Agenda Item 4 and the views expressed by members, the Committee agreed that if a data collection system as proposed under agenda item 4 was functional and usable by all members then there was no need for using the CL, however if this was not the case then the CL should continue to be used as tool for data collection despite its limitations.

⁶ [CX/AFRICA 15/21/5: CRD 4](#) (Comments of Angola, Cameroun, Cabo Verde, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire); [CRD 6](#) (Comments of Ghana and Nigeria)

DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR CCAFRICA (Agenda Item 6)⁷

41. The Delegation of Cameroon as Chair of the In-session working group introduced their report ([CRD 12](#)). He informed the Committee that the objectives of the draft regional strategic plan were consistent with those of the global strategic plan for Codex and that the working group had prepared an implementation plan.

Discussion

42. The Committee considered the draft strategic plan and the implementation plan and agreed that the text was consistent with the global strategic plan.
43. The Committee also noted that the final document should clearly reflect the linkage between the objectives to the relevant goals and/or objectives of the Codex strategic plan to facilitate monitoring and implementation of both plans.
44. The Committee considered each of the four draft objectives and the activities therein, made proposals and amendment only on the strategic objectives and activities highlighted below, while maintaining others as originally proposed:

Strategic objective 1: Ensure effective participation of African countries in the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies.**Objective 1.1: *Establish a regional trust fund for financing Codex activities in Africa.***Activities:

1.1.1 Seek funding for Codex activities and food safety among donors, African governments and regional economic communities.

45. The Committee agreed to add the words “regional economic communities”, noting that regional economic communities are also involved in supporting activities related to the work of Codex and food safety.

Objective 1.3: Encourage member States of CCAFRICA to create and strengthen the capacity of Codex contact points and national committees in CCAFRICA Member States.

46. The Committee agreed to insert the words “encourage member states to ...” so as to include both those members who have not yet created CCPs and those who have already established CCPs to strengthen such points.

Activities:

1.3.3 Build cooperation with FAO, WHO and other development partners in order to strengthen the capacities of Contact Points and national Codex committees.

47. The Committee agreed to insert the words “other development partners ...”

Objective 1.4: *Produce scientific data in line with WHO and FAO specifications, and which can be used by those organizations’ risk assessment entities.*Activities:

1.4.4 Encourage meetings for food safety experts and the establishment of expert committees on various matters of interest to Africa (New activity)

48. The Committee agreed to include this activity as it was found important for the region to have experts that can provide scientific and technical opinion on matters of interest to the region.

Strategic objective 2: Draft African regional food standards that address current and future food challenges.**Objective 2.1: *Encourage the governments of CCAFRICA Member States to compile and present technical information for drafting regional standards relating to their food products.***Activities:

2.2.1 Encourage Member States to collect and retain good scientific data and to share them with research agencies at regional level (New activity)

Strategic objective 3: Ensure the longevity of CCAFRICA activities.

⁷ [CX/AFRICA 15/21/6](#); [CRD 1](#) (Monitoring of Codex Strategic Plan); [CRD 2](#) (Comments of Cameroon, Kenya and Morocco); [CRD 5](#) (Comments of Cameroon); [CRD 6](#) (Comments of Ghana and Nigeria); [CRD 7](#) (Comments of Rwanda); [CRD 8](#) (Comments of Cameroon and South Sudan); [CRD 12](#) (Report of the In-session working group on strategic plan)

Objective 3.1: Organize and encourage African countries to formulate a joint position on the relevant Codex activities.

Activities:

3.1.1 Increase dialogue between African delegates, with a view to harmonizing national positions, at national and regional level.

49. The Committee agreed to insert the words “at national and regional level” as one of the ways to achieving regional positions

3.1.3 Organize within the CCAFRICA, meetings for the development of technical and educational capabilities [New]

Objective 3.4: Develop cooperation with partners and mobilize African decision-makers to fund CCAFRICA activities.

3.4.1 Campaign for funding for CCAFRICA’s activities among partners, African governments and regional economic communities.

50. The Committee agreed to insert the words “regional economic communities”.

Objective 4.3: Encourage and help CCAFRICA Member States to harmonize their domestic legislation and regulations regarding food in light of Codex standards and related texts.

Activities:

4.3.1 Organize and encourage CCAFRICA Member States to dialogue and work together in the regional economic communities in order to harmonize legislation and national food regulations.

51. The Committee agreed to replace the words “at the sub-regional level” with the words “in the regional economic communities”.

Conclusion

52. The Chairman clarified that each member within the region should take ownership of the strategic plan, and that the role of Coordinator would be to facilitate its implementation.
53. The Committee agreed to adopt the strategic plan, and also requested Cameroon and Kenya to finalise it and its implementation plan taking into account the above amendments and including the linkages to the global strategic plan as agreed by the Committee.
54. The Committee also agreed to inform the Commission of its new regional strategic plan.

DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL STANDARDS (Agenda Item 7)⁸

55. The delegation of Cote d’Ivoire, presented the report of the In-session working group (CRD 10), and informed the Committee that the five prioritised food products i.e. dried meat, Baobab (fruits), Gnetum leaves (Eru), shea butter, and fermented cooked cassava based products, listed in CX/AFRICA 15/21/7 were considered and that the criteria used for their prioritisation was found adequate, and that these products were of regional importance. However, he noted that the working group reviewed only 4 project documents as the one on Baobab (fruits) had not been submitted by Burkina Faso. He said that in general all the project documents comply with the criteria laid down in the Procedural Manual and that they required minor amendments in terms of timelines and volumes of production.

Discussion

56. The Committee considered in detail the recommendations of the In-session working group with respect to each proposal as follows:
- a) Dried meat
57. The observer from the United States supported by the European Union requested to know if the project document was intended for the elaboration of regional standard as it made reference to: names of products in other parts of world, global trade and it clearly indicated that the intention was to develop an International Standard.
58. The Delegation of Morocco proposed the inclusion of a definition of Khlii (dried and cooked meat) as follows: “Khlii is preserved meat composed of lean and fat of any animal species (with the exception of swine), that has been inspected ante-mortem and post-mortem, and meat found healthy and fit for human consumption

⁸ [CX/AFRICA 15/21/7](#); [CRD 2](#) (Comments of Cameroon, Kenya and Morocco); [CRD 3](#) (Comments of Codex Secretariat); [CRD 10](#) (Report of the In-session working group)

by the veterinary services. It is a traditional preparation, made using boning/trimming, lanierage, salting/maceration, drying and firing. It is a form of cooked meat covered as the case of a mixture of fat or oil only and packaged in airtight container.

59. The Codex Secretariat said that dried meat was produced in most countries of the world and it might be difficult to define a product standard covering all different production processes. He said that it was important for the project document to focus on the problem that should be addressed which seemed to be mainly hygiene issues. He proposed that the Committee could consider requesting CCEXEC in its critical review process how to most appropriately address the issues related to dried meat production and trade (e.g. a code of hygienic practice or a standard).

Conclusion:

60. The Committee agreed with the recommendation to include the production data and timelines for undertaking the project and to include in the list of examples only for African products and also to refocus the remainder of the document on the development of a regional standard.
61. The Committee agreed to propose new work on a standard for dried meat to the Commission (see Appendix II for the project document) and to establish, subject to the approval of new work by the Commission, an electronic Working Group, led by Cote d'Ivoire and co-chaired by Botswana and Morocco and working in English and French, to prepare the proposed draft standard for dried meat for circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration at its next Session.

b) Fermented cooked cassava based products

62. The Committee agreed to include the scientific name *Manhiot* spp in order to clarify that the product was obtained from fermented cassava only.

Conclusion

63. The Committee agreed to propose new work on a standard for fermented cooked cassava based products to the Commission (see Appendix III for the project document) and to establish, subject to the approval of new work by the Commission, an electronic Working Group, led by Cameroon and co-chaired by Congo Republic and Democratic Republic of Congo, working in English and French to prepare the proposed draft standard for circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration at its next Session.

c) Shea butter

64. The Committee noted that there were existing ISO Standards for this product which would be useful to consider during elaboration of the standard.
65. The Committee agreed to propose new work on a standard for shea butter to the Commission (see Appendix IV for the project document) and to establish, subject to the approval of new work by the Commission, an electronic Working Group, led by Mali and co-chaired by Guinea, working in English and French, to prepare the proposed draft standard for circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration at its next Session.

d) Gnetum leaves (Feuilles de Gnetum)

66. The Committee agreed to propose new work on a standard for *gnetum* leaves to the Commission (see Appendix V for the project document) and to establish, subject to the approval of new work by the Commission, an electronic Working Group, led by Cameroon and Nigeria working in English and French, to prepare the proposed draft standard for circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration at its next Session.

e) Baobab (Fruits)

67. The Committee deferred consideration of this product as no project document had been submitted
68. The Committee also agreed to retain the list of non-prioritised items, and that these would be considered at its next meeting.

GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF CANDIDATURE FROM AFRICA FOR POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY AT THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES (Agenda item 8)⁹

69. The meeting recalled that during its 20th Session, the Delegation of Cameroon presented a paper on guidance for the submission of candidatures from Africa for positions of responsibility at the Codex

⁹ [CX/AFRICA 15/21/8](#); [CRD 2](#) (Comments of Cameroon, Kenya and Morocco); [CRD 6](#) (Comments of Ghana and Nigeria); [CRD 7](#) (Comments of Rwanda)

Alimentarius Commission and Subsidiary Bodies. Due to time constraints, the Committee had not discussed the paper but had agreed to request comments through a Circular Letter and had also agreed that Cameroon would prepare a revised proposal based on the comments received ([CX/AFRICA 15/21/8](#)).

70. The Chair informed the meeting that because of certain legal implications of the paper it might be preferable to keep it as an informal document for use of CCAFRICA members. He invited the Secretary of the Commission to inform the meeting on these implications based on his discussions held with the FAO and WHO legal Counsels.
71. The Codex Secretariat said that the document contained valuable information for countries of the region wishing to apply for positions of responsibility in Codex. However, if such guidance was adopted or in any way formally, agreed by the Committee, in the view of the Legal Counsel, it would have implications on the Commissions prerogative to freely elect or appoint officials, and thus the Commission would have to express itself on such guidance.
72. Several members welcomed the guidance and advice given in the document for those seeking to apply for positions of importance in Codex and supported that it should be maintained internally.
73. The Committee agreed that the document be maintained and further developed for internal use only.

CODEX WORK RELEVANT TO THE REGION (Agenda item 9)¹⁰

74. The delegation of Cameroon as Coordinator for Africa presented a brief report on Codex work relevant to the region and highlighted a number of activities of particular relevance to African countries. He said that as they had held consultation meetings with regional delegations prior to all Codex meetings, in order to align national positions and develop a regional strategy for presenting countries' positions.
75. The CCAFRICA coordinator noted that although African participation in committee work has risen constantly, the participation in working groups and expert bodies still remained limited. This probably was a reflection of the limited research capability of many African countries and ways to rectify the situation were called for.
76. The Chairperson noted that the report would assist the next coordinator to follow up on important activities in the region.

NOMINATION OF THE COORDINATOR (Agenda Item 10)¹¹

77. On the proposal of the delegation of Nigeria, the Committee unanimously agreed to recommend to the Commission that Kenya be appointed as the next Coordinator for AFRICA. The delegation of Kenya accepted the nomination, thanked Nigeria and all members for their support, and pledged to continue working with all delegations on matters of common interest in the region
78. The Committee acknowledged the excellent contribution of Cameroon as the regional coordinator to Codex work in the region.

OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 11)

Update on the Progress of development of the definition for Biofortification of foods

79. The Delegation of Zimbabwe informed the Committee on the progress made towards developing a definition for biofortified foods since its 20th Session. He reported that the 36th Session of the CCNFSDU had recommended a project document on this subject to the Commission for approval of new work in this area, and that CCNFSDU had established an electronic working group chaired by Zimbabwe and co-chaired by South Africa to start drafting a proposal.
80. The Committed noted the information, thanked Zimbabwe and South Africa for their active participation in the work of Codex and requested members of CCAFRICA to support the work as it directly addresses the challenge of hidden hunger faced by the Continent.

DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT SESSION (Agenda Item 12)

81. The Committee was informed that its 22nd Session would be held in approximately two years' time and that more detailed arrangements would be communicated to Members following the appointment of the Coordinator by the 38th Session of the Commission and consultation with the Codex Secretariat.

¹⁰ [CX/AFRICA 15/21/9](#); [CRD 2](#) (Comments of Cameroon, Kenya and Morocco)

¹¹ [CX/AFRICA 15/21/10](#)

SUMMARY STATUS OF WORK

SUBJECT MATTER	STEP	ACTION BY	DOCUMENT REFERENCE (REP15/AFRICA)
Proposed Draft Standard for Dried meat	1/2/3	CCEXEC70, CAC38 EWG Cote d'Ivoire (Chair) Botswana & Morocco (Co-Chairs) CCAFRICA members	Para 62
Proposed Draft Regional Standard for fermented cooked cassava based products	1/2/3	CCEXEC70, CAC38 EWG Cameroon (Chair) Congo Republic and Democratic Republic of Congo (Co-Chair)	Para 64
Proposed Draft Regional Standard for Shea butter	1/2/3	CCEXEC70, CAC38 EWG Mali (Chair) Guinea (Co-Chair) CCAFRICA Members	Para 66
Proposed Draft Regional Standard for <i>Gnetum</i> Spp leaves	1/2/3	CCEXEC70, CAC38 EWG Cameroon & Nigeria CCAFRICA Members	Para 67

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PROJECT DOCUMENT

Proposal for New Work on Africa Regional Standard for Dried Meat

1. Background

Meat is a food item which spoils easily unless kept at low temperatures. Drying of meat with or without the addition of salt is the oldest traditional method of meat preservation in sub-tropical and tropical countries. Processes for a number of traditional local methods have been developed over hundreds of years, but there is no consistent technique which would ensure that the product will always be safe and of an acceptable quality. The preparation of dried meat products differs from one region to another. The following are a few examples of dried meat products:

a) Biltong is a variety of dried, cured meat that originated in Southern Africa. Various types of meat are used to produce it, ranging from beef and game meats to fillets of ostrich from commercial farms. It is typically made from raw fillets of meat cut into strips spiced, dried meats.

b) Kilishi is a version of biltong. It is a delicacy in Hausa Land in Nigeria made from beef, sheep or goat meat after the removal of bone.

c) Odka is sun-dried meat product made of lean beef and is of major importance to nomads in Somalia. In the face of perennial incidence of drought in the Horn of Africa, odka has become important since it is often prepared from drought-stricken livestock.

d) Qwanta is produced in Ethiopia and other East African counties from lean muscles of beef which are further sliced into long strips hung in the kitchen to dry. Prior to drying, the strips are coated with a sauce containing a mixture of salt and spices

e) Khlii is preserved meat. It is composed of lean and fat of any animal species that has been inspected ante-mortem and post-mortem and the meat was found healthy and fit for human consumption by the veterinary services with the exception of swine. It is a traditional preparation cooked meat. Its manufacture uses a boning / trimming, lanièrage, salting / maceration, drying and firing. It is in the form of a cooked meat covered as the case of a mixture of fat or oil only and packaged in airtight container.

2. The purpose and scope of the standard

The purpose of this work is to establish a regional standard for dried meat products with the aim of protecting the consumers' health and promoting fair regional trade in dried meat. The scope of the standard is dried meat products. Dried meat can be defined as strips from drying meat (e.g. beef) free from bones, cartilage and tendons as well as free from fat as far as possible and packed in a suitable container.

3. Its relevance and timeliness

a) Despite the recent advances in refrigeration and packaging technology, more traditional methods of meat preservation, such as salting and drying, continue to play an important role in the meat marketing structure of many countries worldwide. Dried meat products are prepared in many areas of the region. They are regionally traded under different names as shown above and not limited to any particular African region and therefore justify elaboration of a regional standard. Surveys on commercial dried meat products have shown the presence of pathogens such as *Enterobacteriaceae*, *Staphylococci* and *Salmonella* in some export consignments.

b) Most nations have regulations pertaining to the production of dried meat products. There are strict requirements to ensure safe and wholesome production of dried meat products. Factories are required to have inspectors and sanitation plans. In the United States for instance, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is responsible for that oversight. Many European Union countries presently prohibit the importation of meat products, including dried meat, without additional and extensive customs documentation, and further inspections.

c) It is therefore critical to establish a regional Codex standard covering the safety, quality, hygiene and labelling of dried meat products in order to have a reference that has been regionally agreed by consensus between the trading countries.

4. Main aspects to be covered

The most relevant provisions which may be considered are related to:

- a) Definitions
- b) Raw Material specifications
- c) Processing procedures
- d) Products specifications including categories to classify meat products
- e) Establish the tolerance limits for contaminants and micro-organisms
- f) Methods of sampling, inspection and testing
- g) Packaging, labelling, transportation and storage.

5. Assessment against the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities

General criterion: The elaboration of the standard for dried meat products would protect the health of the consumers and would be beneficial for the African region countries in particular, because African countries are the major producers, exporters and consumers of dried meat products. It is necessary that the quality of products meets consumer needs and minimum requirements of food safety.

(a) Volume of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of trade between countries: According to FAO data, the production and trade at a world-wide level has been variable.

(b) Diversification of national legislation and apparent resultant or potential impediments to regional trade: Due to lack of regional standard for dried meat products, regional trade has been widely affected. Importers prefer to import food products based on Codex standards. Therefore, the new work would provide regionally recognized specific standards in order to enhance regional trade and to accommodate the importer's requirements.

(c) International or regional market potential: The import of dried meat products by most countries is increasing. Dried meat products come from different animal species, with different textures and flavours and packaging to meet different markets. Therefore, development of standards for dried meat products will not only enhance trade, but also quality and safety.

(d) Amenability of commodity to standardization: The availability of national standards for different types of dried meat products will lead to adequate parameters for the Codex regional standard of the product. A single standard for dried meat products may cover all available products in the market traded worldwide.

(e) Work already undertaken by other international or regional organizations: There is no international organization that has undertaken an international standard for dried meat products. However, the regional standard for dried meat was developed in 2008 by the Gulf Cooperation Council (a regional standardization organization for Gulf States). National standards, guidelines and regulations have been developed by USA, Australia, etc. FAO Animal Production and Health Technical Papers have covered some aspects of safety and quality of dried meat products. The existing regional and national standards and guidelines may be considered while developing the regional Codex standard for dried meat products.

6. Relevance to the Codex Strategic Objectives

The elaboration of this Codex regional standard for dried meat products is in line with the Codex Strategic Plan 2014-2019 to promote the application of Codex standards by countries in their national legislation and to facilitate international trade.

7. Information on the relation between the proposal and other existing Codex documents

The proposal for elaboration of a Codex regional Standard for dried meat products is part of the terms of reference of the CCAFRICA.

8. Requirement for and availability of expert scientific advice

Regional and international experts will be requested to advise on the elaboration of the draft standard.

9. Requirement for technical input to the standard from external bodies

Recognized international experts and organizations will be requested to advise on methods of analysis and sampling.

10. Proposed time-line for completion of the new work

Elaboration of the standard will take place according to the following timeline.

STEP PROCEDURE	DATE
Review of new work by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 21st Session	2015
Review of new work by the Commission by the 38th Session	2015
Review of the draft Standard for dried meat at Step 3 by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 22nd Session.	2017
Adoption by the Commission at Step 5	2017
Review of the Draft Standard at Step 5 (or 5/8) by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 23rd Session.	2019
Review for adoption at Step 8 at the 39th Session of the Commission.	2019

11. Bibliography:

1. Codex Procedural Manual – Twenty-first Edition (1);
2. 2014-2019 Strategic Plan of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

PROJECT DOCUMENT**Proposal for New Work on Africa Regional Standard for fermented cooked cassava (*Manihot* spp.) based products****1. Scope of the standard**

This document recommends a regional standard for products based on fermented cassava converted into a paste and cooked in a special wrapping.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this standard is to define the identity and quality characteristics of products based on fermented cassava in regional and international trade.

3. Description of the products

The products take the form of cassava bread called “chikwangue” in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, “ébobolo and miondo” in Cameroon, and “mangbèré” in the Central African Republic.

These products are obtained from fresh cassava that has been peeled, diced, soaked in water to ferment then pressed and dehydrated before wrapping and cooking.

However, to improve keeping, products based on fermented cassava can be stored and transported fresh, at deep freezing or quick freezing temperatures, and can be cooked where they will be consumed.

4. Taxonomy

Two main varieties of cassava are grown:

- bitter cassava, unsuitable for human consumption unless it has been previously detoxified and its tubers have been dried and converted into tapioca,
- Sweet cassava, the roots of which can be consumed directly.

5. Chemical composition of cassava sticks

- † Energy: 259 kcal/100 g
- † Carbohydrate: 59.1 g per 100 g (on dry matter basis)
- † Fat: 1.2 g per 100 g (on dry matter basis)
- † Protein: 3.9 g per 100 g (on dry matter basis)

6. Main aspects to be covered

The standard will cover the identity and quality characteristics of a product based on fermented cassava which must depend on control of processing. For consumers, quality is primarily determined through the smell and elasticity of the product and its organoleptic properties.

The manufacturing process of the fermented cassava-based product must ensure the desired organoleptic properties.

This standard should therefore:

- Establish the minimum requirements for technological, food safety, nutritional and organoleptic aspects from the raw material to the final product.
- Define traceability provisions in identifying the final product according to its origins.
- Define standardization parameters to ensure product quality.
- Include compliance provisions for presentation of the packaged product and type of packaging employed.
- Include compliance provisions for labelling and product designation, according to the Codex General Standard for the labelling of pre-packaged foods.
- Include provisions for contaminants with reference to the Codex General Standard for contaminants and toxins in food and feed.
- Include provisions with reference to the Recommended International Code of Practice: General Principles of Food Hygiene.

7. Provisions concerning quality

The quality of products based on fermented cassava is defined as follows:

- ✦ For safety, by: the hydrogen cyanide content and the level of biological, chemical and physical contamination,
- ✦ For organoleptic, by: colour, purity, smell, taste and texture,
- ✦ For presentation, by: length and cross-section, regularity of shape, environmental impact of packaging.

Products based on fermented cassava can be divided into three categories with regard to these various parameters: "Extra", category I and category II.

8. Provisions concerning sizing

Sizing provides for three levels defined by the length and cross-section of the final product. These will be called size A, size B and size C.

9. Tolerance provisions

Quality and size tolerances are permitted in all packaging for products that do not comply with the requirements of the indicated category.

10. Provisions concerning presentation

- 10.1 Presentation of ebobolo
- 10.2 Presentation of chikwangue
- 10.3 Presentation of mangbèré
- 10.4 Presentation of miondo
- 10.5 Packaging provisions

11. Contaminants

- ✓ Biological contaminants: mycotoxins
- ✓ Chemical contaminants: fertilizer and pesticide residues, bisphenols, pollution, etc.
- ✓ Physical contaminants: fragments of metal, plastic, roots, and small stones
- ✓ Natural toxins: HCN (hydrogen cyanide) residues.

12. Assessment against the criteria for the establishment of work priorities

12.1 General criterion

Consumer protection regarding implementation of health protection measures and prevention of fraudulent practices. The required quality of the product to meet consumer' needs and minimum quality and food safety requirements. The elaboration of a standard in preparing a paste based on fermented cassava will be very useful for developing countries because they are major producers and exporters, as well as consumers of the commodity.

12.2 Criteria applicable to products

a) **Volume of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of trade between countries:**

Cassava (*Manihot esculenta* Grantz) and its products have a significant role in the diet of the Cameroonian population. IFAD and the National Program of Roots and Tubers' Development (PNDRT) have indicated that they account for 43% of financial exchange volumes in the roots and tubers market (IFAD, 2002) and 10% of total consumption expenditure (PNDRT, 2006). However, traditional processing and storage methods are still widely employed. Cassava has 5 main products intended for human consumption with significant market demand, including:

- 286,000 tonnes for cassava sticks;
- 102,141.6 tonnes for Fufu;
- 49,028 tonnes for Gari;
- 20,020 tonnes for Waterfufu.

b) National and sub-regional production and consumption volume

The domestic supply of cassava sticks is 90,494 tonnes for a value of 33,935,230,046 XAF. Survey data on exports of cassava sticks obtained from plant protection stations at Douala and Yaoundé airports, Douala port and the border market at Kyé-osi (sub-regional trade for Central Africa) indicated that approximately 2,800 tonnes of cassava sticks were exported in 2012. Overall Cameroonian market demand for cassava sticks is estimated at 280,000 tonnes for a value of 107,248,758,750 XAF.

Fermented cassava paste is by far the most widely available on the market and is consumed by (53%) of households in Pointe Noire, while chikwangue is consumed by 64% of households in Brazzaville (*Study on the commercialization of Agriculture and domestic private sector investment: cassava in the Republic of Congo Final Report 1999*).

c) Diversification of legislation

There is no regional harmonized legislation for foods in general, or for fermented cassava paste in particular.

d) International market potential

Cassava is one of the principal amyloseous root and tuber plants grown in Cameroon and around the world. Africa is the leading world cassava producer, with an annual production of 110 million tonnes, followed by Asia (55 million tonnes) and Latin American and the Caribbean (37 million tonnes). Cassava farming employs approximately 583,926 producers with an average production of 4,204,988 tonnes and 349 billion XAF in revenue (FAO-MINADER [Ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development], 2014). Cassava is also industrially processed into various cassava products. Outside the African Region, particularly the Central African Sub-region where fermented cassava-based products are traded, cassava sticks, chikwangue and mangbère are in great demand in niche markets in African communities throughout Europe, Asia and America.

e) Amenability of commodity regarding standardization

The cultivars employed; the manufacturing process of fermented cassava-based products; the presentations and provisions concerning quality; and tolerances lend themselves well to standardization of the commodity.

The standard should include definitions and descriptions of the commodity and the following quality parameters: category, smell, taste, colour, acidity, fibre content, foreign matter, contaminants and presentation.

f) Existence of current or draft general standards covering the main issues of food safety and fair trading

- Standard for sweet cassava (CODEX STAN 238-2003)
- Standard for bitter cassava (CODEX STAN 300-2010)
- General standards for the labelling of prepackaged foods (CODEX STAN 1 -1985)
- General principles of food hygiene (CAC/RCP 1- 1969)

g) Number of commodities for which standards would need to be elaborated.

- The fermented cassava-based product

13. Relevance to the Codex Strategic Objectives

The work undertaken to elaborate this regional standard is in line with Strategic Goals 1 and 3 of the Codex Strategic Plan.

Strategic Goal 1: Establish international food standards that address current and emerging food issues

Strategic Goal 3: Facilitate the effective participation of all Codex members

14. Information on the relation between the proposal and other existing Codex documents

Provisions concerning quality, size, tolerance and the presentation of Codex standards for sweet and bitter cassava will assist in defining similar provisions for fermented cassava-based products.

15. Determination of the need for and availability of scientific opinions

The JECFA would need to determine the ADI for the hydrogen cyanide content.

16. Identification of any need for technical contributions to a standard from external organizations for programming purposes

No requirement identified to date.

17. Work Programme

STEP PROCEDURE	DATE
Review of new work by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 21st Session	2015
Review of new work by the Commission at its 38th Session	2015
Review of the Draft Standard for fermented cooked cassava at Step 3 by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 22 nd Session.	2017
Adoption by the Commission at Step 5	2017
Review of the Draft Standard at Step 5 (or 5/8) by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 23rd Session.	2019
Review for adoption at Step 8 at the 39th Session of the Commission.	2019

PROJECT DOCUMENT**Proposal for New Work on Africa Regional Standard for Shea Butter****1. Purpose and scope of the standard**

The purpose of the proposal is to establish a regional standard for shea butter, taking into account composition and quality factors.

The elaboration of a regional standard for shea butter complies with the purposes of the Codex (Protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in the food trade by developing international and regional standards).

The scope of this Africa Regional Standard for shea butter will include composition and quality factors.

2. Its relevance and timelines

The world production of shea butter was estimated to be 176,000 tonnes in 2010, primarily by seventeen African countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Senegal, Sudan, Sudan, Chad, and Togo). Shea butter production has increased in a forty-year timeframe from 30,000 tonnes to 176,000 tonnes (2).

Most of the shea butter produced in the world is traded between African countries. This production, called subsistence consumption, is not included in official statistics (2).

In addition to its traditional use in African cooking, shea butter is used to prepare numerous agri-food products (chocolate, chocolate bars, sweets, vegetable oils and margarines, etc.).

Given the increase in shea butter production in Africa and the regional and international development of shea butter trade, it has become necessary to elaborate a regional standard for this commodity.

3. Main aspects to be covered

The proposed new work to elaborate the regional standard for shea butter will be carried out according to the Strategic Plan of existing Codex standards for fats and oils. It will contain the following parts:

- Scope
- Description
- Essential composition and quality factors
- Food additives
- Contaminants
- Hygiene
- Labelling
- Methods of analysis and sampling
- Tables indicating the fatty acid composition of the oils described.

4. Criteria for the establishment of work priorities

The proposed new work to elaborate a standard for shea butter is in accordance with the Codex Criteria (Twenty-first Edition of the Procedural Manual) for the establishment of work priorities.

a) Volume of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of trade between countries.

World shea butter production was estimated at 176,000 tonnes in 2010. Nigeria is the largest producer with 69.8% of world production, followed by Ghana (9.6%), Mali (9.2%) and Burkina Faso (7.3%). (2)

In Africa, shea butter is used as fat for cooking or frying food, primarily in rural areas, which accounts for 80 percent of total consumption.

In 2006, shea butter demand in Europe was estimated to be 60,000 tonnes (95% in the chocolate industry). This demand is expected to increase in the chocolate industry as a result of EU directive 2000/36/EC on the addition of vegetable fats other than cocoa to include up to a maximum of 5% in chocolate. (3)

b) Diversification of national legislation and apparent or potential impediments to international trade.

The quality of shea butter depends on the quality of the nuts and the production method of the butter (traditional, mechanized or semi-mechanized, or industrial). There are currently no regionally or internationally-recognized quality standards for the butter.

The absence of a regional/international shea standard has resulted in the proliferation of private standards and legislative/regulatory texts in the Africa zone which, in turn, has obstructed regional trade in shea butter.

The elaboration of the regional shea butter standard will contribute to the harmonization of regional legislative and regulatory texts, will assist in protecting consumers and will facilitate regional and international trade in the commodity.

c) International or regional market potential.

The majority of shea butters marketed for human consumption come from Africa.

World shea nut production increased significantly from 1960 to 2010 (169,000 tonnes versus 718,000 tonnes). This production increase is primarily the result of an increase in surface area from 85,000 hectares in 1961 to 516,760 hectares in 2010 (2).

Shea butter is primarily an African product.

World shea butter production has increased from 30,000 tonnes to 176,000 tonnes in a forty-year timespan and most of the shea butter produced in Africa is consumed within the Region.

d) Amenability of commodity regarding standardization.

A shea butter regional standard can now be elaborated by CCAFRICA

e) Coverage of the main consumer protection and trade issues by existing or proposed general standards.

There is currently no regional or international shea butter standard. It has become necessary to elaborate a regional standard for shea butter in protecting consumer health and in ensuring fair international trade practices.

f) Number of commodities which would require separate standards indicating whether raw, semi-processed or processed.

This work will concern the elaboration of a regional standard for unrefined shea butter.

g) Work already undertaken by other international organizations and/or work suggested by the relevant international intergovernmental organization(s).

The absence of a regional/international standard for shea butter has led to the elaboration of the EMUWA standard for Unrefined Shea Butter and the draft ECOWAS Code of Practice for Walnuts, Almonds and Unrefined Shea Butter.

5. Relevance to the Codex Strategic Objectives

The elaboration of a regional standard for shea butter is in keeping with: i) Article 1 a) the statutes of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (protecting the health of consumers and ensuring fair practices in the food trade); ii) Points (c) and (d) of Section (v) of the Procedural Manual of the CAC (Subsidiary Bodies of the CAC, mandate of CCAFRICA); iii) Strategic Goal No 1 of Strategic Plan 2014-2019 of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Establish international food standards that address current and emerging food issues).

6. Information on the relation between the proposal and other existing Codex documents

Codex reference standards:

- Standard for edible fats and oils not covered by individual standards (CODEX STAN 19-1981);
- Standard for named animal fats (CODEX STAN 211-1999);
- Code of Practice for the storage and transport of edible fats and oils in bulk (CAC/RCP 36-1987).

7. Identification of any requirement for and availability of expert scientific advice

Regional and international experts will be requested to advise on the elaboration of the draft standard.

8. Identification of any need for technical input to the standard from external bodies for programming purposes

Recognized international experts and organizations will be requested to advise on methods of analysis and sampling.

9. The proposed timeline for completion of the new work, including the starting date, the proposed date for adoption at Step 5, and the proposed date for adoption by the Commission; the timeframe for developing a standard should not normally exceed five years

Because this Committee only meets every other year, it is proposed that the Codex Standard for Shea Butter be elaborated through the accelerated procedure.

Elaboration of the standard will take place according to the following timeline:

STEP PROCEDURE	DATE
Review of new work by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 21st Session	2015
Review of new work by the Commission at its 38 th Session	2015
Review of the Draft Standard for shear butter at Step 3 by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 22 nd Session.	2017
Adoption by the Commission at Step 5	2017
Review of the Draft Standard at Step 5 (or 5/8) by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 23rd Session.	2019
Review for adoption at Step 8 at the 39th Session of the Commission.	2019

10. Bibliography:

- 10.1 Codex Procedural Manual – Twenty-first Edition (1);
- 10.2 CNUCED - 2008, Production mondiale des noix, amandes et beurre de karité;
- 10.3 FAOSTAT 2008- Production et consommation du beurre de karité;
- 10.4 2014-2019 Strategic Plan of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

PROJECT DOCUMENT

Proposal for New Work on Africa Regional Standard for *Gnetum* Spp. Leaves**1. Scope of the standard**

This document recommends a regional standard for *Gnetum* spp. leaves, also known as “eru”, “okok”, “fumbua” and “okasi”.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this standard is to define the identity and quality characteristics of *Gnetum* spp. leaves in regional and international trade.

3. Description of the product

Gnetum spp. is a semi-wild climber in equatorial bush fallows. The species most commonly found in Africa are *Gnetum africanum* and *Gnetum buchholzianum*. These two tropical forest species of *Gnetum* are morphologically similar, but have slight differences in leaf shape.

They are creeping or climbing vines with often knotted and branched stems, without resinous channels. They are dioecious. The leaves are opposed, with a wide, oval or elliptical blade (Flore du Congo Belge et du Ruanda-Urundi, 1948).

However, it is not easy to distinguish between the two species by their vegetative growth. They can be identified with certainty only through close examination of their reproductive organs (inflorescence) and anatomical structure. In the male inflorescence of *Gnetum africanum*, the flowers are packed together and distributed regularly, and the internode diameter of the male panicle is small and approximately the same throughout the course of its length. In the male inflorescence of *Gnetum buchholzianum*, on the other hand, the flowers are more separated on one panicle and the internode diameter differs substantially between the base and the tip (Stevens, 1990 referred to by Mialoundama, 1999). Peasants are often oblivious to these differences when picking the leaves.

4. Taxonomy

Gnetum spp. is a lianescent shrub belonging to the class Gnetophyta, subphylum Gymnosperms, where it is positioned between the Gymnosperms and the Angiosperms. *Gnetum* belongs to the *Gnetaceae* family which contains a single genus with thirty or so species. It is located essentially in the tropical and equatorial regions of Africa, America and Asia, where it basically grows as a climber, and rarely as a shrub or tree. Of the approximately thirty known species of *Gnetum*, only two (*Gnetum africanum* and *Gnetum buchholzianum*) grow wild in tropical forests from Nigeria to Angola, across Cameroon, Gabon, Central African Republic, Congo and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

These plants are dioecious: the male flowers produce catkins composed of stamens, and the female flowers produce catkins composed of ovules barely protected by an envelope (Letouzey 1986).

5. Chemical composition of *Gnetum* leaves

According to Mialoundama (2000), *Gnetum africanum* leaves from Congo have the following composition per 100 g of dry matter: 70 g of carbohydrates including 40 g of cellulose, 16.5 g of proteins, 6 g of fats and 7 g of ash.

Elements	<i>Gnetum africanum</i>	<i>Gnetum buchholzianum</i>
Manganese (Mn)	243.1	231.4
Iron (Fe)	162.6	168.6
Aluminium (Al)	133.5	106.5
Boron (B)	24.4	22.9
Copper (Cu)	12.5	3.4
Zinc (Zn)	24.1	12.1
Potassium (K)	0.978	0.544
Phosphorus (P)	0.167	0.544
Calcium (Ca)	0.830	0.108

Magnesium (Mg)	0.395	0.334
Sodium (Na)	0.157	0.184
Chlorine (Cl)	0.384	0.016
Sulphur (S)	0.381	0.030
Silicon dioxide (SiO ₂)	0.169	0.131

Okok contains all eight essential amino acids. The essential amino acid content per 100 g of dry matter is: 0.7 g of isoleucine, 1.4 g of leucine, 0.8 g of lysine, 0.2 g of methionine, 1.0 g of phenylalanine, 0.8 g of threonine, 0.2 g of tryptophan and 0.9 g of valine.

6. Main aspects to be covered

The standard will cover the identity and quality characteristics from the food safety, water content, colour, ash, foreign matter and labelling perspectives in obtaining a product with the desired characteristics and in protecting consumer health.

This standard should therefore:

- Establish the minimum requirements applying to *Gnetum* spp. leaves, including the quality parameters and other requirements;
- Determine quality tolerances;
- Include compliance provisions regarding packing and the type of packaging used;
- Include compliance provisions regarding labelling and product designation according to the *General Standard for the labelling of prepackaged foods*;
- Include provisions for contaminants in keeping with the *General Standard for contaminants and toxins in food and feed*;
- Include provisions in keeping with the *General Principles of Food Hygiene*.

7. Provisions concerning quality

The quality of *Gnetum* spp. leaves is defined by:

- Colour;
- Taste;
- Presence of foreign matter;
- Biological and chemical contaminants;
- Water content.

In countries in the Congo basin, *Gnetum* is distinguished through its provenance. Thus *Gnetum* (Fumbwa) from Mbandaka (Equateur) and Bandundu is highly valued by DRC consumers, whereas *Gnetum* from Kananga and Kisangani are considered to have a bitter taste.

In connection with the above-noted parameters, *Gnetum* spp. leaves can be classified in three categories:

- "Extra";
- Category I; and
- Category II.

8. Provisions concerning presentation

8.1 The age of the leaves

According to the desired culinary preparation or technological use, market demand for *Gnetum* spp. leaves affects either young or mature leaves.

8.2 Sales units

Gnetum leaves are presented either as a leaf bundle or as chopped leaves. In Congo, harvested *Gnetum* is packaged in small packs of about 260 g. These packs are stored in a damp place, notably a hut with an earth floor and a straw roof, or kept under a tree.

The leaves, cut into thin strips, are sold in all European cities surveyed under various trade names. In France, Belgium and Portugal, they are sold under the name of fumbua, while in London and Madrid, they are sold under the name of okasi or eru.

Fumbua, okasi or eru is imported from four countries (Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon and DRC) and is sold in three forms: fresh fumbua, dried fumbua and frozen fumbua. The first of these are sold in all cities, while those with more “commercial” packaging are only sold in London and Madrid.

8.3 Provisions concerning packaging

The fresh product is sold loose, while the dried and frozen product is sold packaged. Two types of packaging are used for the dried product: unlabelled bags tied manually and cellophane bags sealed with a label and marketing information (manufacturer’s name, weight, product composition).

Improvement in packaging has allowed okasi or fumbua to reach supermarket shelves in India and Pakistan.

9. Provisions concerning quality tolerances

Quality tolerances are permitted in all packaging for products not complying with the requirements of the category stated.

10. Contaminants

- ✓ Biological contaminants: mycotoxin-releasing fungi and other micro-organisms;
- ✓ Chemical contaminants: fertilizer and pesticide residues, bisphenols, pollution, etc.
- ✓ Physical contaminants: fragments of metal, plastic and roots, dead leaves, and insect and mollusc fragments.

11. Assessment against criteria in establishing work priorities

11.1 General criterion

Consumer protection regarding: health protection measures and prevention of fraudulent practices. The required quality of the product in order to meet consumer needs and food safety requirements. Elaboration of a standard for *Gnetum* spp. will be very useful for producer countries because of its trade potential in the food, agrifood, pharmaceutical and energy sectors.

11.2 Criteria applicable to products

a) Volume of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of trade between countries

Gnetum spp. leaves are highly prized in Nigeria and Central Africa. In Congo, *fumbua* is the second most consumed leaf vegetable after *saka saka* (Toreilles, 1991). Discovered by Welwitsh, the climber still grows wild although it was first domesticated in Cameroon and Nigeria. Domestication of *Gnetum* spp. was made possible; *inter alia*, through the work of researchers at ICRAF, IRAD and Limbe botanical gardens in Cameroon. This work was originally begun on experimental field crops in Kumba, Limbe and Batchenga in south-east and central Cameroon. Subsequent extension of results achieved to peasants should assist in reducing the anthropogenic pressure on this resource, as observed in Congo (Profizi et al., 1993).

Depending on the retailers and importers, imported products are primarily marketed to Nigerians, Central Africa nationals (Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, DRC, and Cameroon), , as well as Ghana and Angola.

The potential market for fumbua, eru, okok and okasi is estimated at more than 156,341 consumers (Eurostat data, 1994), 15,868 of whom are in Belgium, 64,286 in France, 73,000 in the United Kingdom, 2,986 in Spain and 216 in Portugal.

b) National and sub-regional production and consumption volume

In Congo, *Gnetum* leaves generally come from natural forests, fallow areas and agro-forestry systems. It should, however be noted that *Gnetum africanum* and *Gnetum buchholzianum* leaves are classified according to a decreasing order of provenance: natural forest; agro-forestry system; agricultural production system; domestication.

Export data for the department of Fako, in the south-west region of Cameroon bordering Nigeria, registers 1030 tonnes from January to June. In Cameroon, *Gnetum* trade generates approximately 5.1 billion XFA, or 0.3% of domestic exports.

c) Diversification of legislation

There is no regional harmonized legislation for foods in general, and for *Gnetum* leaves in particular.

d) International or regional market potential

In the Republic of Congo, as in all Congo basin countries, non-wood forest products (NWFP), particularly *Gnetum* spp., are generally gathered by local communities and sold initially to wholesales or directly to consumers. The quantity of *Gnetum* harvested depends on orders from large town traders. When traders arrive in a given village in the Republic of Congo, they offer money to the village chief or a third party to distribute it to the best harvesters. However, some products from Nigeria often re-enter the marketing chain through wholesalers who either deliver directly and exceptionally to consumers, or to foreign markets or retailers working as vendors in urban markets who, in turn, re-sell them to consumers.

e) Amenability of commodity regarding standardization

All *Gnetum* spp. cultivated/domesticated in Africa lend themselves well to standardization on the basis of the quality criteria indicated under section 7. The standard should include definitions and descriptions of the products and the following quality parameters: category, taste, colour, fibre content, foreign matter, contaminants and presentation.

f) Existence of current or draft general standards covering the main issues of food safety and fair trading

- ✓ General Standard for the Labelling of Prepackaged Foods (CODEX STAN 1 -1985);
- ✓ General Principles of Food Hygiene (CAC/RCP 1- 1969);
- ✓ General Standard for Contaminants and Toxins in Food and Feed (CODEX STAN 193-1995).

g) Number of commodities for which standards would need to be elaborated.

For sales units available in markets, consideration should be given to elaborating two standards, one for the leaf bundle and one for leaves cut into thin strips.

12. Relevance to the Codex Strategic Objectives

The work undertaken to elaborate this regional standard is in keeping with Strategic Goals 1 and 3 of the Codex Alimentarius Commission Strategic Plan.

Strategic Goal 1: Establish international food standards that address current and emerging food issues.

Strategic Goal 3: Facilitate the effective participation of all Codex members

13. Information on the relation between the proposal and other existing Codex documents

There is no relation between this proposal and existing CODEX documents.

14. Determination of the need for and availability of scientific opinions

It would be desirable to undertake further analysis of bitterness of some *Gnetum* varieties.

15. Identification of any need for technical contributions to a standard from external organizations for programming purposes

No requirement identified to date.

16. Proposed timeline

Elaboration of the standard will take place according to the following timeline:

STEP PROCEDURE	DATE
Review of new work by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 21st Session	2015
Review of new work by the Commission at its 38 th Session	2015
Review of the Draft Standard at Step 3 by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 22 nd Session.	2017
Adoption by the Commission at Step 5	2017
Review of the Draft Standard at Step 5 (or 5/8) by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 23rd Session.	2019
Review for adoption at Step 8 at the 39th Session of the Commission.	2019