

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 3, 4 and 12

ASIA/19 CRD8

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR ASIA

Nineteenth Session

Tokyo, Japan, 3-7 November 2014

COMMENTS OF INDIA

Agenda Item 3 Information Note on The Successor Initiative to the Codex Trust

India appreciates the efforts of FAO and WHO in preparing the exhaustive paper on Successor Initiative to the CTF. India appreciates the valuable support of the CTF to the region for facilitating participation. India is of the view that the successor initiative to CTF should include the following aspects as well:

- Create awareness about Codex Fund and its activities through quarterly/half – yearly electronic newsletter
- Conduct capacity building workshops for the stakeholders and the NCCP in the developing countries
- Conduct workshop on Codex Alimentarius: Principles and Procedures for the CTF funded delegates prior to the main session of every Committee meeting so that their participation can be more effective
- Regular feedback from the CTF Funded delegates on use of Codex Standards and related texts in their national legislations
- Create E – Learning courses on Codex Alimentarius at par with such courses that are being conducted by organization like World Bank, ADB etc. with a certificate being issued on completion of courses. The stand alone courses can broadly cover the following aspects:
 1. E - learning course on Codex Procedural Manual
 2. E – learning course on use of Codex documents
 3. E – learning course on Scientific Assessment Mechanism of Codex and the need for submission of data
 4. E – learning course on submission of new work proposals for General and Commodity Committees
 5. E – learning course on risk analysis in Codex

Agenda Item 4 Revitalisation of FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees Proposals on Strengthening the Role and Platform of RCCS

India supports the proposal to revitalise and strengthen the role of the Coordinating Committees.

India supports the proposal that the agenda items of all the 6 RCCs should be aligned and specific focus should be on common regional concerns.

India agrees that effective responses are not received for circular letters. An online system to collect the regional data on food safety and quality concerns would be a better option. It should be ensured that the data is routed through the National Codex Contact Points of the Member Countries to the Secretariat. The data should be collected in a timely manner to allow for their analysis and submission within the period specified. However, this would be a success if all the members submit the data on a regional basis for a particular agenda item.

It is also a good idea to have a key note speech by an eminent high-level speaker, a technical paper and a facilitated discussion on regional issues of priority and common challenge.

India also feels that the RCCs should not waste their resources in developing regional standards because in today's time with increasing globalization and trade, every product that may be specific to a region is available in most of the Countries. Therefore, it is better to propose global standards.

India agrees on the importance and value of continuing to exchange information on food control systems, in particular to support Countries' continuing efforts to strengthen their systems. The type of information to be shared and analysis of this information would be critical. It is important to first develop a system for exchange of information. One such system has already been envisaged in the Asian Region by FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. A web based platform will be developed and the members will share the information on a continual basis rather than through one – time workshops. It has also been decided that countries will share the responsibility of maintaining the platform on yearly rotation basis with Singapore, taking the lead followed by India, Thailand, Philippines and Bangladesh. All 22 participant countries have agreed to share the information and Cambodia, Japan and Malaysia have also expressed their interest in active contribution. The possible information to be shared as identified is:

- a) Success stories of best practices
- b) Various studies/projects undertaken e.g. on food poisoning cases / outbreaks
- c) Food Safety Emergencies (food poisoning cases and outbreaks), emerging food safety issues
- d) Labelling requirements of the countries
- e) Inspection, Legislation, Training Information
- f) Food Inspector Core Competencies
- g) Laboratory protocols
- h) Training Programmes/courses or tools for a) food inspectors, b) food producer and handlers (including business owners) and c) schools
- i) Investigate the provision of tools to assist in the development of legislation
- j) Sharing of industrial practices e.g. supermarket field trip
- k) Practices of chain outlets e.g. Tesco, Daiso, 7-eleven

India also agrees that it a very important task of a RCC to identify the needs and priorities of the region and there should be proposer mechanisms to do so.

India is of the view that the Regional Strategic Plan have been developed on the basis of Global Strategic Plan and the time frame of the Regional Strategic Plan can be aligned to the Codex Strategic Plan, however, it is important to address the regional concerns of the region in the Regional Strategic Plan.

Agenda Item 12 Discussion Paper on Development of a Regional Standard for Makgeolli & Samgyetang Presented by the Republic of Korea

India appreciates the efforts of the Republic of Korea to prepare the project document on Development of Regional Standard for Makgeolli and Samgyetang. However, the trade data as presented in the project document for both the commodities shows that the products are traded outside the region also. It has been clearly mentioned in the Codex Procedural Manual that when proposing to develop a regional standard, the coordinating committee concerned should fully take into account paragraph (d) of the Terms of Reference of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees, and provide well-documented and objective evidence that **there is significant intra-regional trade, and that there is no significant trade, between or within other regions.**

In case there is substantial production and trade of a regional commodity in countries outside the region, the Executive Committee should recommend to the concerned commodity committee to consider elaborating a global standard taking into account its work program.

Further, the TOR of the RCCs as mentioned in the procedural manual says that the Coordinating Committee will develop regional standards for food products moving **exclusively or almost exclusively** in intra-regional trade.

Therefore, India suggests that the Committee should consider developing global standards for both Makgeolli and Samgyetang.