Codex Alimentarius Commission (28th Session)
Rome, 4-9 July 2005

European Community Comments on the Implementation of the Joint
FAO/WHO Evaluation of the Codex Alimentarius and Other FAO and
WHO Work on Food Standards / General Implementation Status

(Agenda item 12a, ALINORM 05/28/9C Part I)

Member States competence
Member States vote

The Member States of the European Community (MSEC) highly appreciate the work that has been carried out until now on the implementation of proposals endorsed by the 26th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, reflected in Tables I and II of the document. The MSEC especially recognize the important supporting role of the Codex Committee on General Principles to take on a large number of the proposed actions, including revisions of the Procedural Manual.

Strengthening Codex Management

The management tasks of the Codex Alimentarius Commission benefit from the input provided by the Executive Committee. To keep pace with changing needs and challenges of Codex Members it is necessary to keep the Codex work updated and assure its legitimacy on a more structural basis. The MSEC believe that the supporting role of the Executive Committee would be strengthened if the Codex Secretariat could supply sophisticated documentation on strategic issues on a continuous basis.

The MSEC are of the opinion that following directions for improvement should be considered:

1. Strengthen the advisory role of the Executive Committee in keeping the Codex work tailored to the needs of its Members;

2. Strengthen the resources of the Codex Secretariat to provide to the Executive Committee with strategic proposals based on thorough analysis;

3. Continue modernising the Procedural Manual with the assistance of CCGP. In particular, the relations between the Commodity Committees and General Committees are described in the Procedural Manual but few guidance is given for the relations between General Committees. Consistency in guidance would strengthen the management of Codex.

Facilitators

The MSEC remain to be convinced of the added value of using facilitators but can support the recommendation made by the 21st Session of the Committee on General Principles (CCGP) that committees consider the use of facilitators on an experimental basis with modalities to be defined, taking into account issues related to efficiency, transparency and the costs involved.
In addition, the MSEC are of the opinion that CCGP should provide advice on proposals 35 (action-oriented reports of meetings which focus on decisions and not discussion) and 36 (ways to take into account the opinions of smaller developing countries unable to be represented fully at Codex meetings).

**Review of the Regional Coordinating Committees**

The MSEC believe that, in the context of globalisation of the food trade, the usefulness of regional standards seems to have decreased and note that in practice a number of Regional Committees no longer produce Regional Standards.

The MSEC do not support annual meetings of the Regional Coordinating Committees as this increased frequency would not be compatible with the current very tight meeting schedule.

**Scientific advice in Codex**

The MSEC wish to express their deep concerns regarding financial problems encountered by the joint FAO/WHO expert committees and consultations. In this regard, it seems that this problem mainly originates in the financial contribution from WHO. The MSEC therefore urge WHO to put in place the appropriate mechanisms to secure the financing of this essential activity at the basis of Codex work.