



Reviewing the Participation of the MENA Region in Codex Proceedings

*MENA Codex Colloquium
12-14 September 2021*

Rationale for Food Standards Harmonization

Reviewing Methodological Aspects of the Review

Results of Current Level of Participation of the MENA Region in Codex Proceedings



PART 1

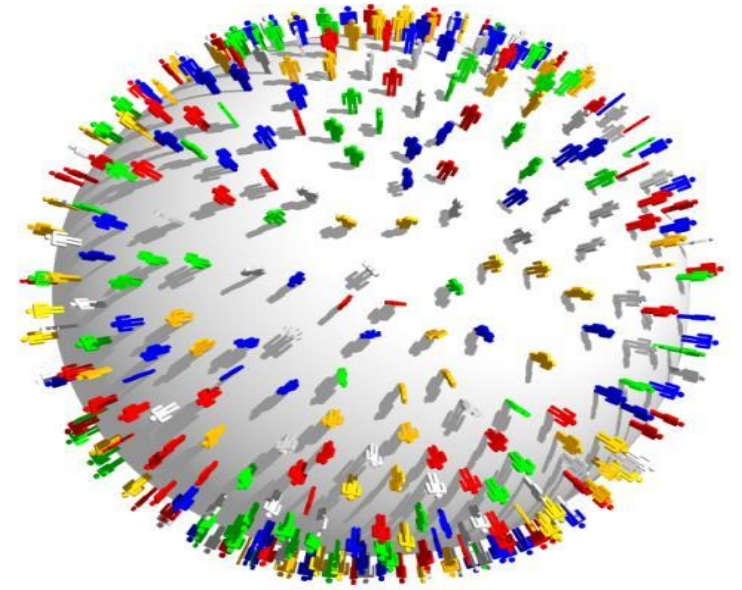
Why Harmonize Food Standards?

Food: A Needed, Heavily Traded Commodity...

4

Food Security : An Ongoing Challenge

- ❑ By 2050 the World Population will reach an estimated 9.6 Billion individuals
 - *UN report 2013: World population prospects: the 2013 Revision – Highlights and advance tables, Working paper N0 ESA/P/WP228, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, NY*



Food is One of the Most Traded Commodities

- ❑ 2 Trillion Dollars of Food traded internationally (*Codex website, 2021*)

A Multinational Loaf

Many food ingredients from a number of countries



INGREDIENTS: ENRICHED BLEACHED FLOUR (WHEAT FLOUR, MALTED BARLEY FLOUR, NIACIN, IRON, THIAMIN MONONITRATE (VITAMIN B1), RIBOFLAVIN (VITAMIN B2), FOLIC ACID), WATER, WHOLE GRAINS (WHOLE WHEAT FLOUR, BROWN RICE FLOUR (RICE FLOUR, RICE BRAN)), HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP, WHEY, WHEAT GLUTEN, YEAST, CELLULOSE. CONTAINS 2% OR LESS OF EACH OF THE FOLLOWING: HONEY, CALCIUM SULFATE, VEGETABLE OIL (SOYBEAN AND/OR COTTONSEED OILS), SALT, BUTTER (CREAM, SALT), DOUGH CONDITIONERS (MAY CONTAIN ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING: MONO- AND DIGLYCERIDES, ETHOXYLATED MONO- AND DIGLYCERIDES, ASCORBIC ACID, ENZYMES, AZODICARBONAMIDE), GUAR GUM, CALCIUM PROPIONATE (PRESERVATIVE), DISTILLED VINEGAR, YEAST NUTRIENTS (MONOCALCIUM PHOSPHATE, CALCIUM SULFATE, AMMONIUM SULFATE), CORN STARCH, NATURAL FLAVOR, BETA-CAROTENE (COLOR), VITAMIN D3, SOY LECITHIN, SOY FLOUR.

GUAR GUM
India



Guar gum is used to keep bread moist. This white powder is ground from guar plant seed pods primarily grown in India.

Source: Sara Lee

CALCIUM PROPIONATE
Netherlands



Calcium propionate is a mold inhibitor. This powdery preservative is manufactured in many countries.

HONEY
China, Vietnam, Brazil, Uruguay, India, Canada, Mexico, Argentina



Honey is increasingly used as a natural sweetener, and domestic supplies can fall short. It is produced by small-scale beekeepers, so Sara Lee purchases it from multiple countries to meet its needs.

FLOUR ENRICHMENTS
China



Flour enrichments are required to replenish the vitamins lost in the milling process. According to Sara Lee, the industry has consolidated, limiting its options for suppliers.

BETA-CAROTENE
Switzerland



Beta-carotene is added to provide a color to the bread and crust. This artificial coloring is available from many countries.

VITAMIN D3
China



Vitamin D3 is a supplement used to aid in calcium absorption. China is one of the leading suppliers of vitamins.

WHEAT GLUTEN
France, Poland, Russia, Netherlands, Australia



Wheat gluten is added to the bread to help keep its structure and shape. Sara Lee uses many suppliers to meet its needs.

Photograph by Tony Cenicola/The New York Times

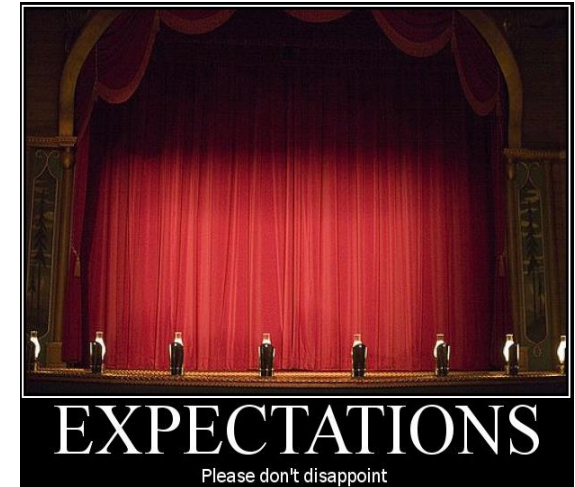
Consumer Expectations

6

A safe, nutritious, high quality, abundant, affordable, and varied food supply

Governments operate effective food control systems

Imported foods are produced to acceptable food standards comparable to domestic products



There is a Need for International Standards

International Standards : Leadership for Change

8

- ❑ Served the international community for close to 6 decades :
 - Leveling the playing field between nations
 - Addressing emerging issues
 - Supporting consumer protection and removing undue impediments to trade
- ❑ Led the way in transforming food regulatory measures :
 - **Developing and Adopting Risk Analysis Principles**
 - Leading role in :
 - Allergen management
 - GMO assessment
 - Nutrition labeling requirements
 - **Addressing Emerging issues :**
 - Assessment of radionuclides
 - Addressing Melamine incident, etc.



❑ FAO and WHO collaborated to establish a joint food standards program

❑ The program consists of three independent but complementary elements:

1. Scientific Advice
2. **A standards setting body (Codex Alimentarius Commission)**
3. Capacity building/technical assistance



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

What is Codex?

The Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex)

- ❑ Is an intergovernmental body established in 1963
- ❑ Currently consists of **188 member countries** and one member organization (EU) = **189 members**
- ❑ Members vs. **Observers: 239** Observers - **59 IGOs, 164 NGOs, 16 UN.**



What Does Codex Do?

❑ The Codex Alimentarius Commission is mandated to develop international food standards to :

- Protect the health of consumers
- Ensure fair practices in the food trade
 - E.g.: Fraud, misinformation, misrepresentation

❑ Coordinate all food standards work at the international level



How Does Codex Do Its Work?

- ❑ Codex develops its standards, guidelines and recommendations through the use of subsidiary bodies.
- ❑ Codex has 4 types of subsidiary bodies, each hosted by a member country, established to carry out its work:

1. General subject or “Horizontal” Committees

- Relevance for all food commodities
- E.g. Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL)
- E.g. Codex Committee on Food Additives (CCFA)

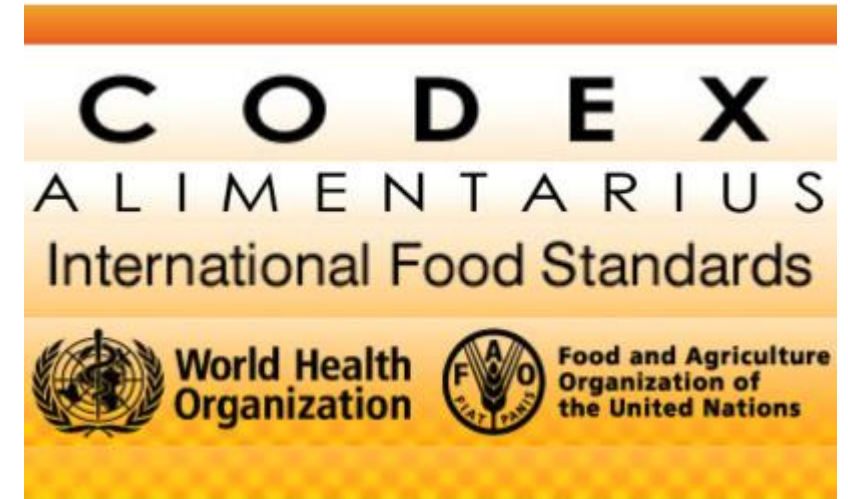
2. Commodity specific or “Vertical” Committees:

- ❑ Develop standards for specific foods or classes of food
 - E.g. Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO)
 - E.g. Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP)

3. Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Forces

- ❑ Time limited and address emerging issues

4. FAO/WHO Regional Coordinating Committees



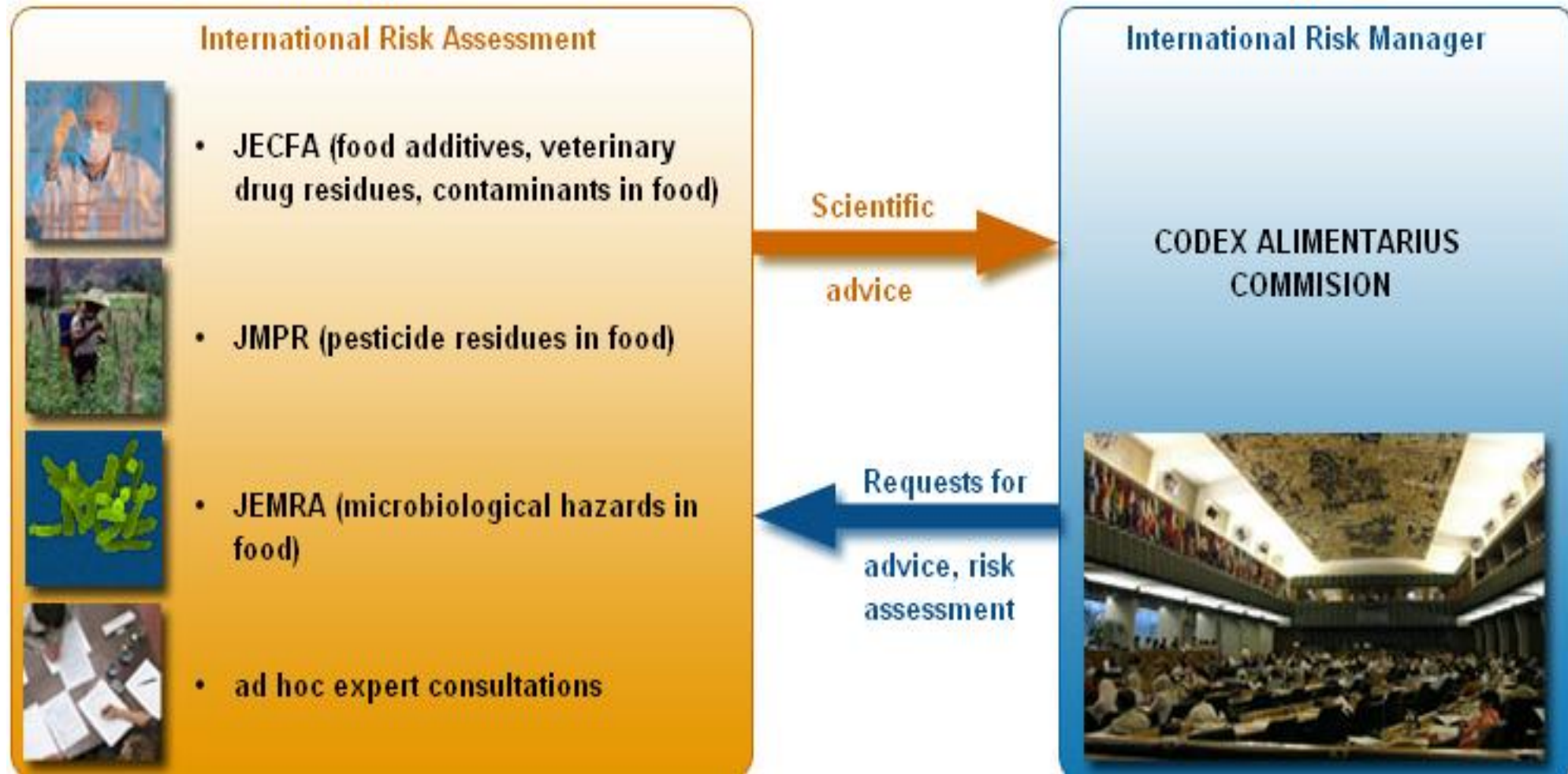
Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures Agreement (SPS Agreement) – Protects Human/Animal/Plant Health

□ SPS Key linkages to Codex:

- SPS identifies **Codex standards & guidelines** as international benchmark.
- Measures taken by countries that “conform to” Codex standards are “presumed” to be consistent with SPS obligations;
- Members are strongly encouraged to base their national measures on international standards (where they exist);
- Members invited to participate in relevant International standard Setting Bodies (ISSBs) to the greatest extent possible.

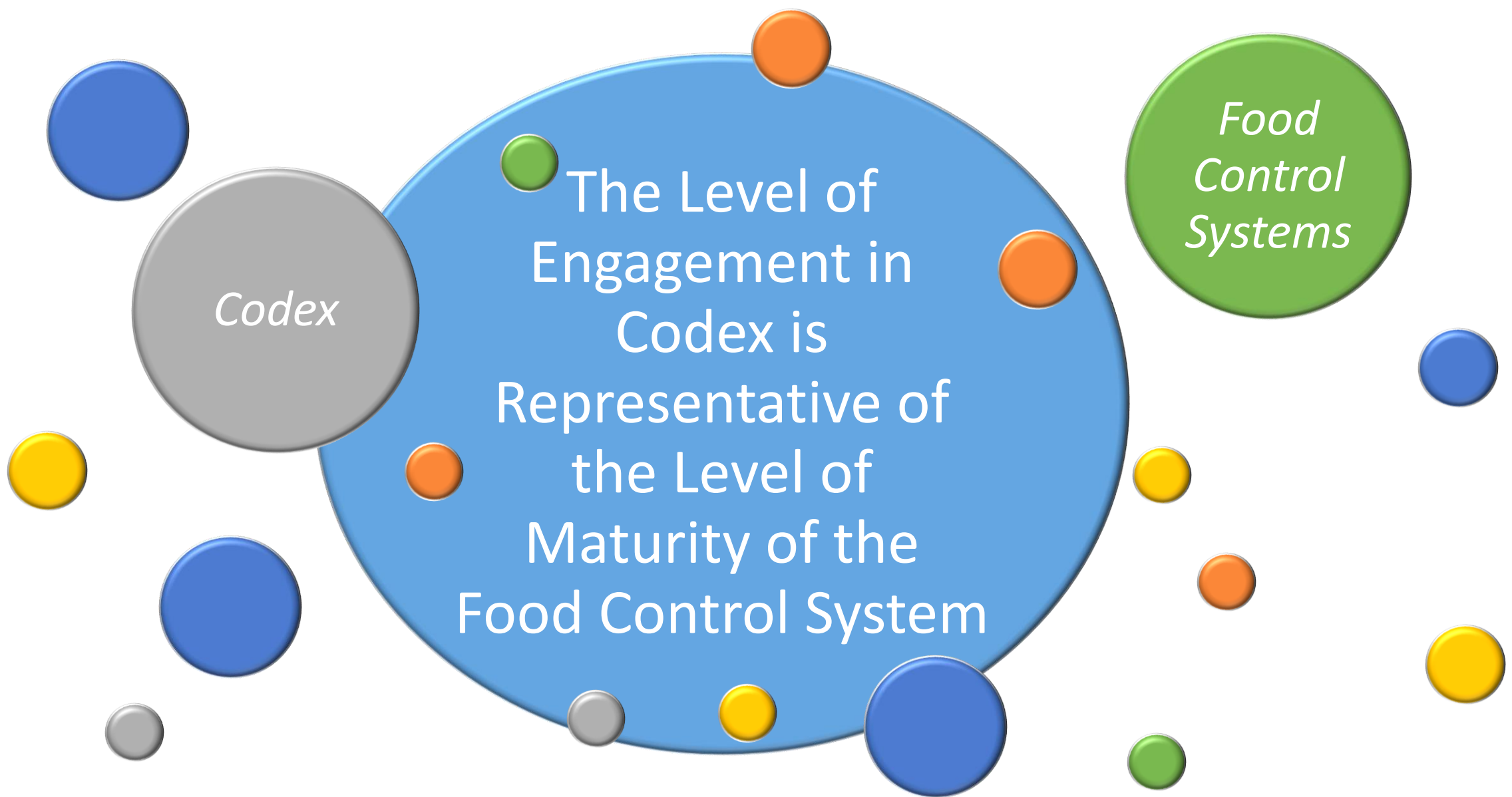


We owe to Codex the Scientific Foundations of Decisions ¹⁴

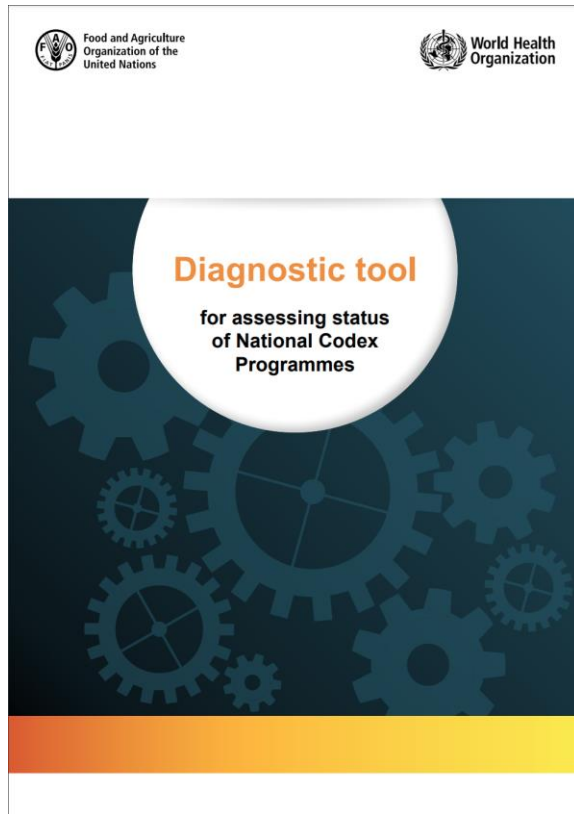


- *Leveling the Playing Field in Food Regulatory Oversight*

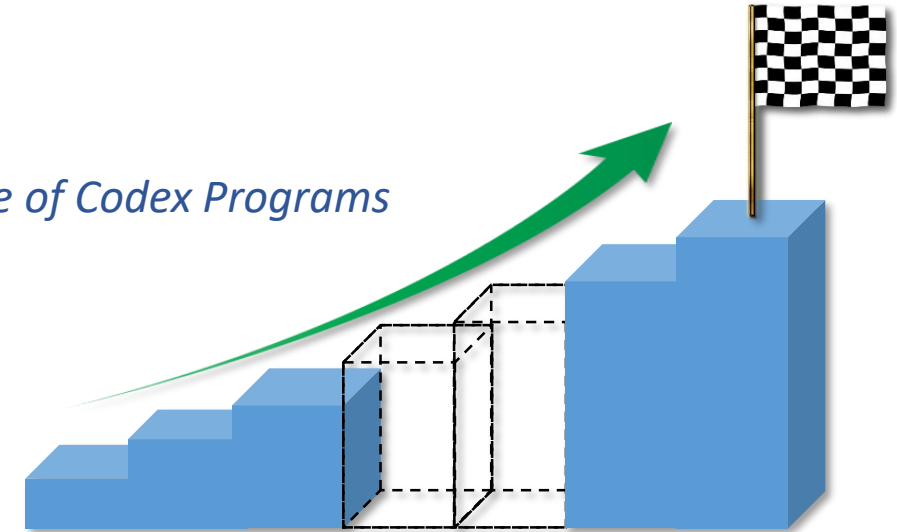




One of the Objectives to Enhance Food Control Systems



Availability of Tools to Assess the Performance of Codex Programs



Methodology Followed to Assess Performance / Participation

18

Use of Codex Committee Reports:

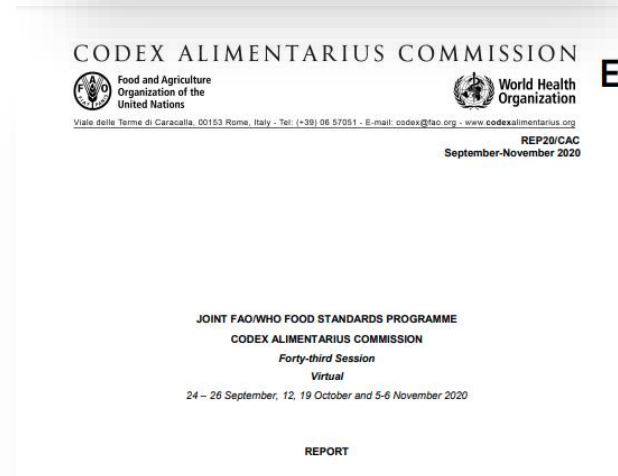
- Accessible,
- Consistent Information

Assess the Level of Participation in Codex Proceedings from the Region

- Quantitatively
- Qualitatively, based on type of interventions



Meeting	Place	From	To	Agenda Report	EN	FR	ES	AR	ZH	RU
CAC44	TSA	08/11/2021	13/11/2021	Agenda Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CAC43	Virtual	24/09/2020	06/11/2020	Agenda Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CAC42	Geneva Switzerland	08/07/2019	12/07/2019	Agenda Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CAC41	Rome Italy	02/07/2018	06/07/2018	Agenda Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CAC40	Geneva Switzerland	17/07/2017	22/07/2017	Agenda Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



REFCOC2 Appendix I

23

Proposals for New Work (Agenda Item 8)

Development of Guidelines for the Safe Use and Near East for Food Production
CACAC approved the new work project.

FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR THE RESUME EAST (CONE)¹

For this committee, CACAC considered the following items: Final Adoption, Proposals for new work and Discontinuation of work. CACAC followed the recommendations of CODEX/C79 for these items.
Final Adoption of Codes Texts (Agenda Item 8)

Regional Standard for Mixed Zaster

CACAC adopted the regional standard of Step 8 noting that it would be published following endorsement by CCFCA and CCFI.

Proposals for New Work (Agenda Item 8)

CACAC approved the new work project.

Discontinuation of Work (Agenda Item 8)

Regional standard for labnah

CACAC discontinued the ongoing work to develop a regional standard for labnah.

COMMENT ON NUTRITION AND FOODS FOR SPECIAL DIET USES (CODEX/FU)

For this committee, CACAC considered the following items: Final Adoption, Adoption at Step 1, and Discontinuation of Work. CACAC followed the recommendations of CODEX/C79 for these items.
Final Adoption of Codes Texts (Agenda Item 8)

Adoption of Codes Texts at Step 1 (Agenda Item 8)

CACAC adopted the provisions for xanthan gum (INS 4140) and pectins (INS 440) as thickeners in the Standard for Infant Formulas and Formulas for Special Medical Purposes intended for infants (CXG 72-1981).

Adoption of Codes Texts at Step 1 (Agenda Item 8)

Review of the Standard for Follow-up Formula: Section B: proposed draft scope, definition and introduction

Members while not opposing to the adoption at Step 5 highlighted, among others, the need for further consideration of the:

- definition expressing either support or opposition for the text in square brackets;
- name of the product especially with regard to the use of the term "lotion" which may be misleading and conflict with the General Standard for Food Additives; and
- section 3.6.5 as a current wording could be interpreted to be.

One Member, supported by Observers who proposed that references to WHO documents and Special Medical Purposes be included in the scope in line with the Standard for Infant Formula and Formulas for Special Medical Purposes (CXG 72-1981).

Some Observers expressed the view that the text was not ready for adoption at Step 5 as the current name of the product and appropriate nomenclature and gave the impression that these products were necessary; and that cross promotion was not sufficiently addressed in the labelling section. Some Members noted the need for the Committee to consider the issues and proposed that the Commission to coordinate the work.

¹ CACAC 2008B Rev.1, CACAC 2013 Rev.1, CACAC 2018B Rev.1, CACAC 2019 Rev.1, REPER/ECOC2, REPER

Why is Participation a Good Indicator

❑ Supports Continued Engagement

- To Anticipate changes in standards and adapt the national regulations
- To exchange information and share views on food safety and quality issues.

❑ Being part of the decision making-process

- Presenting the Country Position
- Making sure that the international standards accounts for the national reality
- Proposing changes or new standards to the benefit of the country, region, and/or agrifood production Sector – Supports the Development of the Sector and Market Access Opportunities



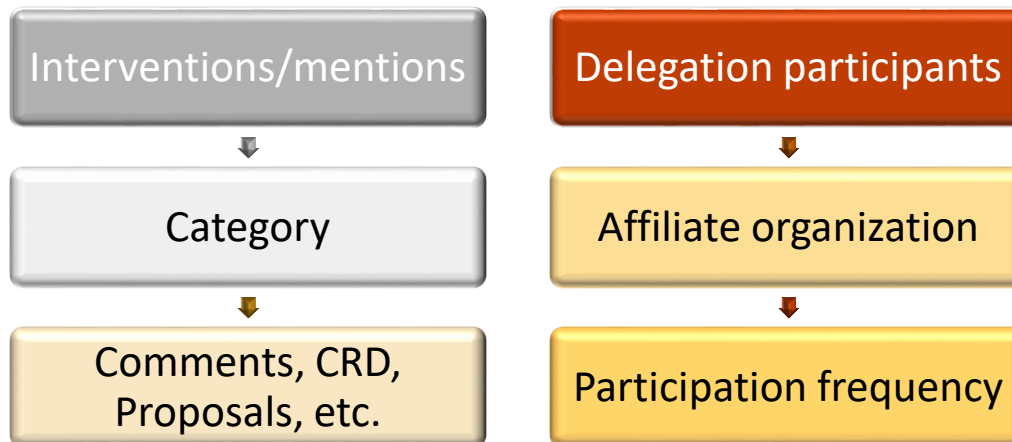
Methodology Applied

☐ Systematic review of meeting reports from 2010 to 2021:

- CCCF - Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods
- CCRVDF - Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods
- CCFA - Codex Committee on Food Additives
- CCPR - Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues
- CCFICS - Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems
- CCNFSDU - Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses
- CCFL - Codex Committee on Food Labelling

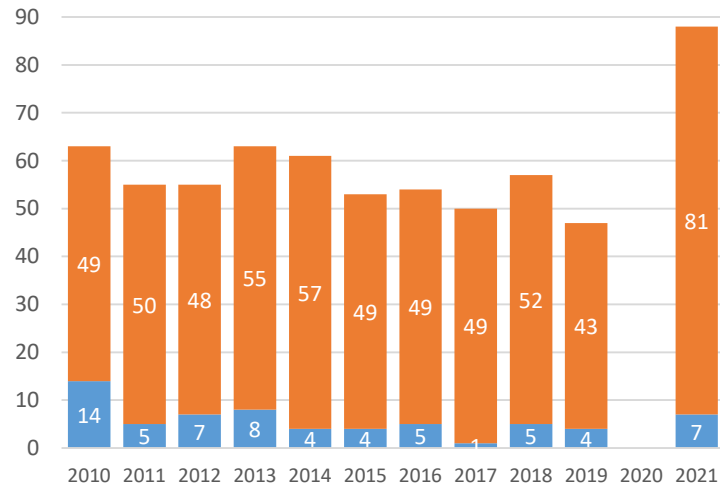
18 countries of the Arab region:

- ☐ Algeria
- ☐ Bahrain
- ☐ Egypt
- ☐ Iraq
- ☐ Jordan
- ☐ Kuwait
- ☐ Lebanon
- ☐ Libya
- ☐ Mauritania
- ☐ Morocco
- ☐ Oman
- ☐ Qatar
- ☐ Saudi Arabia
- ☐ Sudan
- ☐ Syria
- ☐ Tunisia
- ☐ United Arab Emirates
- ☐ Yemen

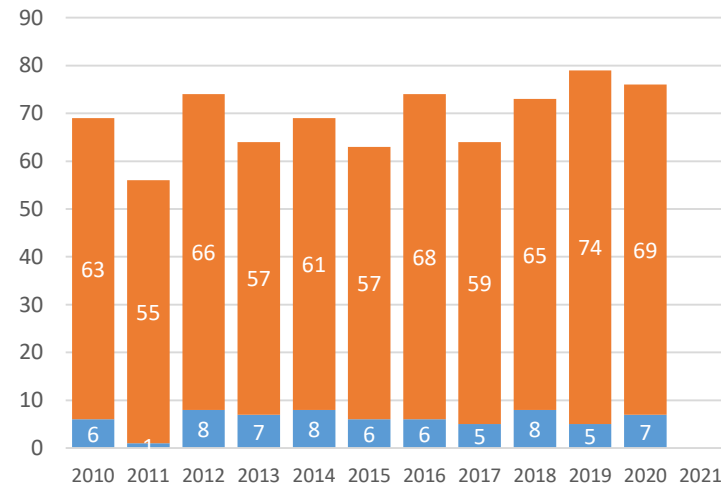


Participation at Codex meetings

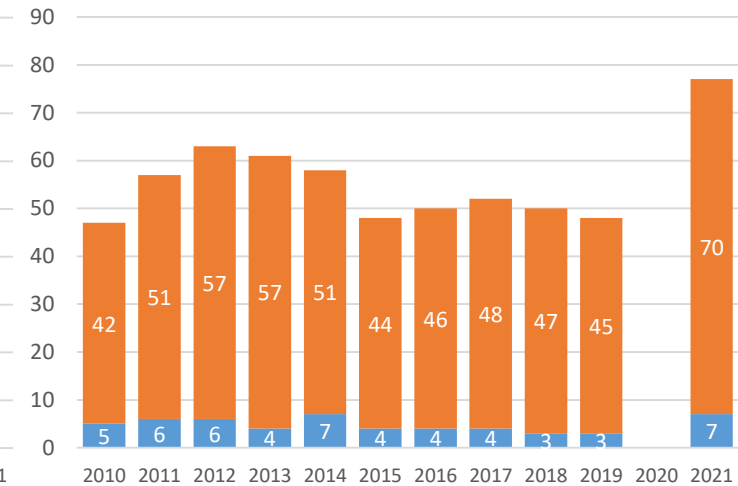
CCCF



CCNFSDU



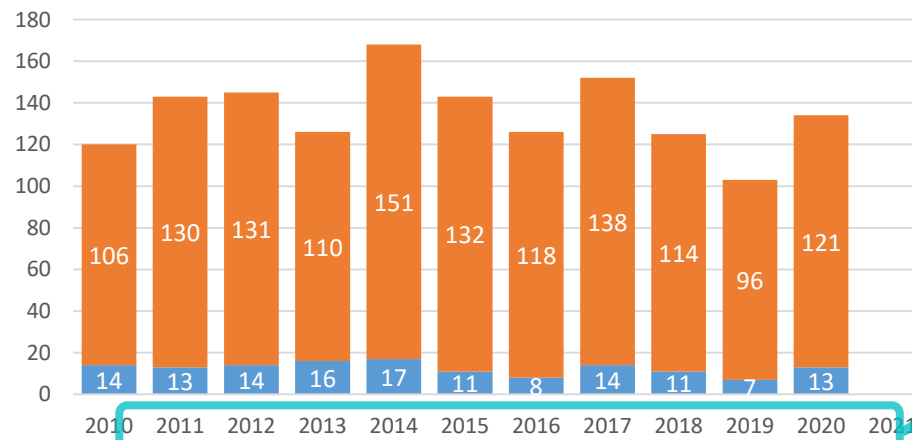
CCPR



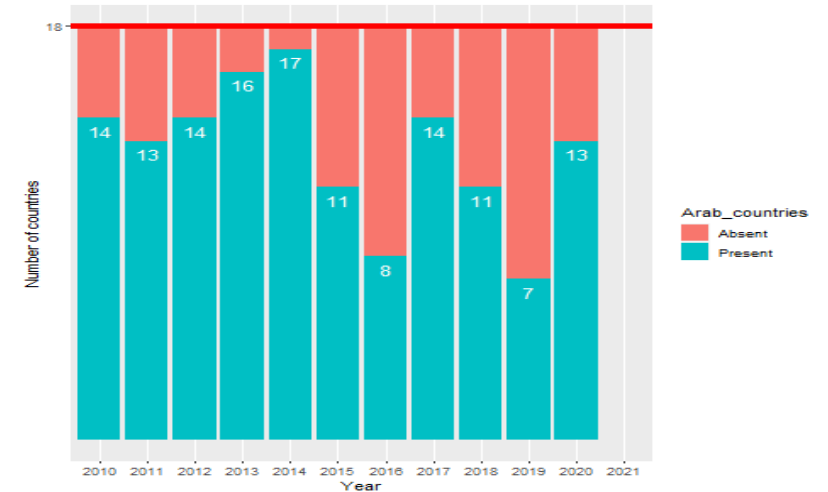
Arab countries

Other countries

CAC



CAC



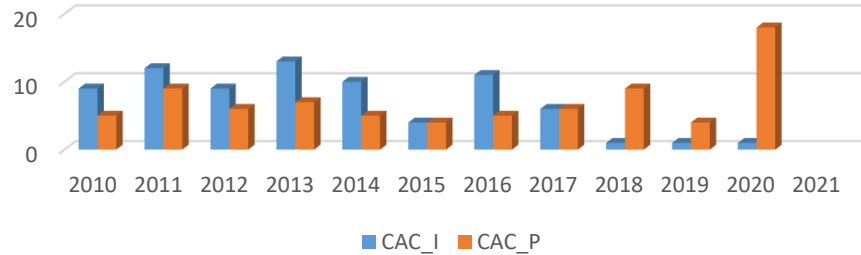
All Arab Country Delegations Present at Codex Meetings

22

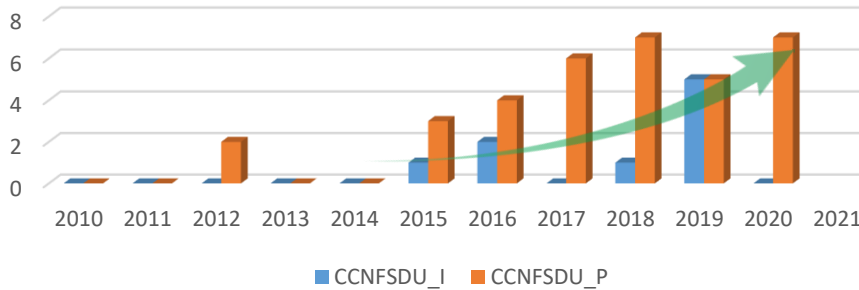
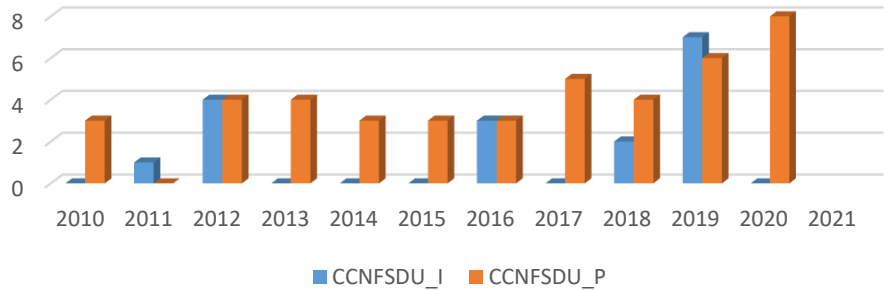
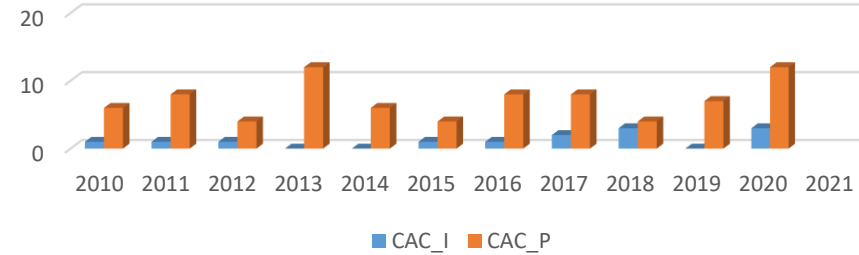


Example of Two Active Members

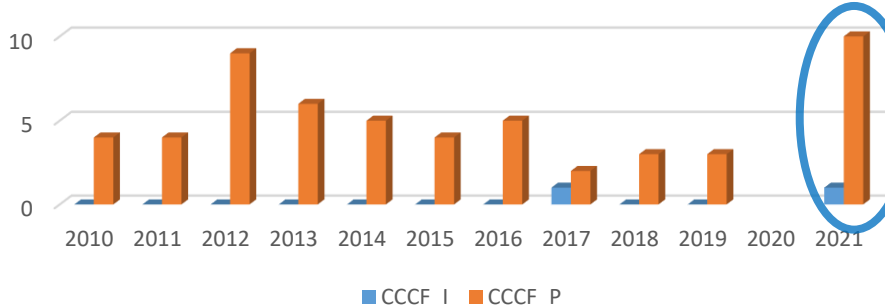
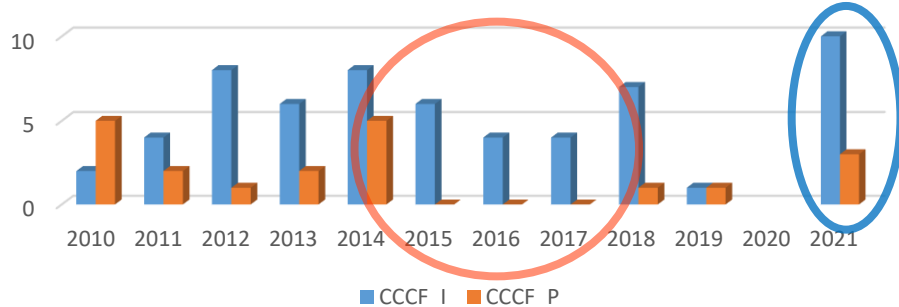
Egypt



Morocco



Increase of interest



Virtual meetings

↘ \$

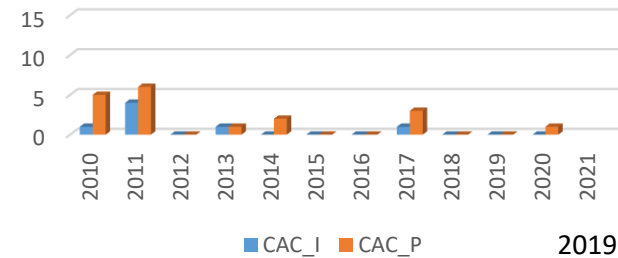
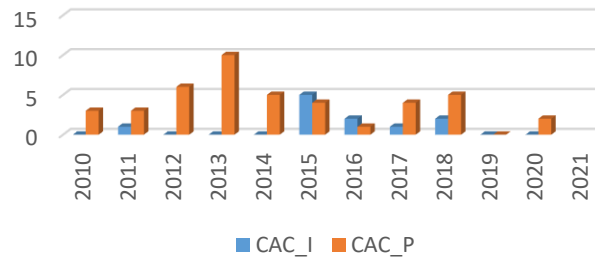
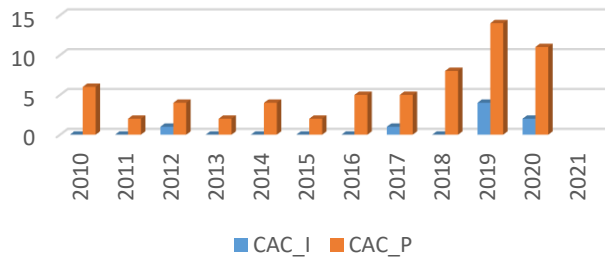
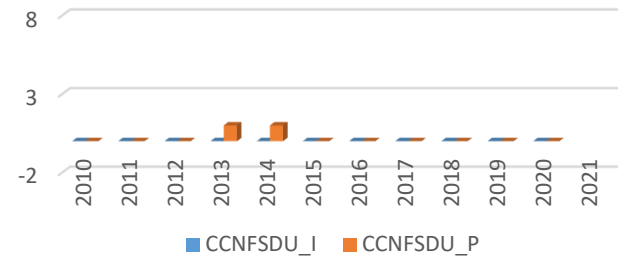
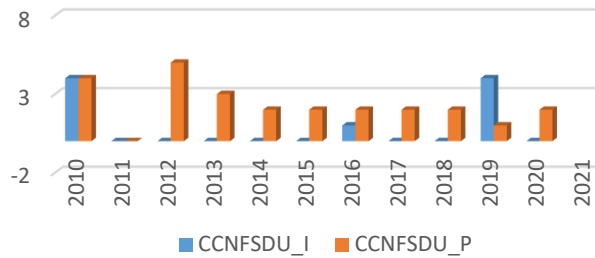
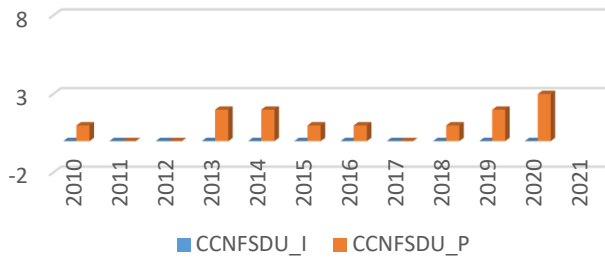
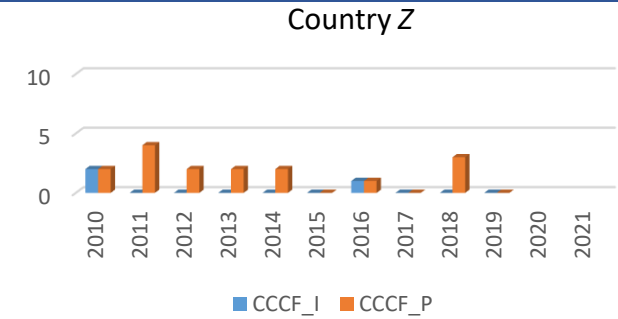
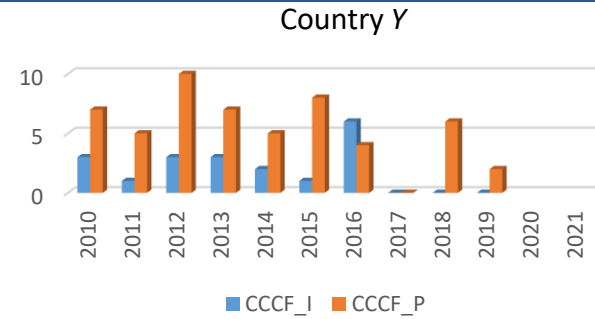
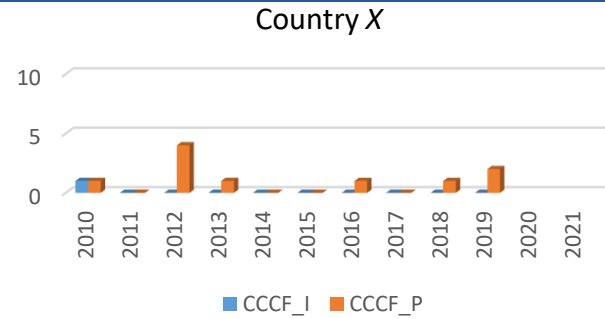
↗ opportunities to more participants

→ More « people » are informed

I : Interventions/mentions
P : Number of Delegation participants

Being active without being present at the meeting

Other Country Examples

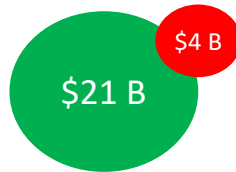


2019 Agrifood products

Export

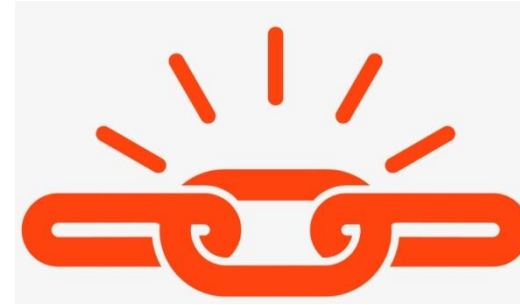
Import

I : Interventions/mentions
P : Number of Delegation participants
Source : <https://comtrade.un.org/>



Significant Potential and Future Opportunities

Future Work



How Can we Bolster Participation and Effective Participation in a Sustainable Fashion?



How Do we enhance National Codex Programs?



Why is the level of involvement different between countries from the Region

