



ANALYSIS OF AGENDA ITEMS IN PREPARATION FOR THE 27th SESSION OF THE CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD IMPORT AND EXPORT INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS

Prepared to Support the Participation Codex Communities of Practice Supported by GFORSS*

16 - 20 September 2024 • Cairns, Australia

Disclaimer and Disclosure of Interest

It is important to note that the proposed analysis and associated conclusions and recommendations are stemming from the work of independent food regulatory experts. The analysis and associated recommendations or positions are presented as mere suggestions and should not be considered as a direction or final recommendation to the competent authority empowered to develop and endorse Codex positions

Disclosure of Interest: *Experts involved in the development of this analysis contribute to various food safety and nutrition regulatory capacity building initiatives funded by other Governments, aid agencies, industry and international organizations.*

Objectives

This document offers a review and analysis of the agenda items planned for discussion at the 27th session of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems, scheduled to take place physically in Cairns, Australia from 16 September 2024 – 20 September 2024.

The document is intended for possible use by the Codex communities of practice promoted by the Global Food Regulatory Science Society (GFORSS) as part of their contribution to enhancing awareness and supporting effective participation in international standard setting meetings (Codex meetings) by representatives from members and observers.

This document will offer an analysis of select key agenda items to support the development of positions at the national and regional level. This analysis is indicative in nature and does not represent an official position of the organization, its membership or its management.

The analysis provided in this document offers a factual review of key agenda items of CCFICS27, pertaining to:

- A. [Agenda Item 2: Matters arising from the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies](#)
- B. [Agenda Item 3: Information on activities of FAO and WHO and other international organizations relevant to the work of CCFICS](#)
- C. [Agenda Item 4: Draft Consolidated Codex Guidelines related to Equivalence \(Comments at Step 3\)](#)
- D. [Agenda Item 5: Draft Guidelines on the Prevention and Control of Food Fraud \(Comments at Step 3\)](#)
- E. [Agenda Item 6: Draft revision and updating of the Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification System \(CXG 60-2006\) \(Comments at Step 3\)](#)
- F. [Agenda Item 7: Discussion paper on guidance on appeals mechanism in the context of rejection of imported food](#)
- G. [Agenda Item 8: Discussion paper on the standardization of sanitary requirements](#)
- H. [Agenda Item 9.1: Review and update of Appendix A - the list of emerging global issues](#)

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Summary of Positions

Agenda Item 2: Matters arising from the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies

Document Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/2](#)

Status in Codex Step Process: N/A

The matters for information provided are to be noted

Agenda Item 3: Information on activities of FAO and WHO and other international organizations relevant to the work of CCFICS

Document Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/3](#), [CX/FICS 24/27/3 Add.1](#)

Status in Codex Step Process: N/A

The matters for information provided are to be noted

Agenda Item 4. Draft Consolidated Codex Guidelines related to Equivalence (Comments at Step 3)

Document Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/4 \(Add.1\)](#)

Status in the Codex Step Process: Step 3 – to be discussed at the Committee at Step 4

We recognize the value in consolidating existing Codex texts on equivalence

However, the current draft of the consolidation does not always align with the 2023 document. The draft also includes new definitions.

Equivalence serves broader purposes beyond resolving trade disputes and warrants therefore due consideration in the way the consolidated texts are developed.

Substantial revisions may need to be considered to align the document with the 2023 document (CXG 101-2023), and consider removing content that exceeds existing guidance on equivalence.

This would require either extensive work during the committee meeting or returning the text to Step 2 for further consideration.

Agenda Item 5: Draft Guidelines on the Prevention and Control of Food Fraud (Comments at Step 3)

Document Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/5](#)
[\(Add.1\)](#)

Status in Codex Step Process: Step 3 - to discussed at the Committee at Step 4

We note the great progress accomplished by the EWG in the development of the proposed guidelines.

We recommend that the “Preventive approach” be better reflected in the way food fraud management strategies are being discussed and positioned in the document.

We consider that Issues such as Geographic Indications are **GI and other matters related to Intellectual Property ought to be considered outside of the mandate of Codex and should therefore be excluded from the scope of this guidance.**

We propose the addition of this statement to text related to Scope: “Issues related to Intellectual Property (IP) are excluded from this guideline”

Agenda Item 6: Draft revision and updating of the Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification System (CXG 60-2006) (Comments at Step 3)

Document Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/6](#)
[\(Add.1\)](#)

Status in Codex Step Process: Step 3 – to be discussed at the Committee level at Step 4

We note that the proposed text offers progress and a good update to the existing guidance on Traceability – with more practical considerations related to the adoption of “Traceability Systems” harnessing new technologies and accounting for the needs of developing countries.

Given that there does not seem to be major divergence between members (based on the WG report) – We may wish to recommend this text proceeds to Step 5 after CCFICS27 discussions and if these discussions are conclusive

Agenda Item 7: Discussion paper on guidance on appeals mechanism in the context of rejection of imported food

Document Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/7](#)

Status in Codex Step Process: N/A

Although guidance exists in CXG 25-1997 (Guidelines for the exchange of information between countries on rejection of imported food), such guidance does not cover specifically how countries can act to develop their own mechanism for appeal and for management of requests from exporting countries,

We recommends that New Work be considered under CCFCIS to develop such guidance, which would be a useful addition to the guidance offered to countries on management of import/export relationships, including the way appeal mechanisms are to be set up and operated.

Agenda Item 8: Discussion paper on the standardization of sanitary requirements

Document Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/8](#)

Status in Codex Step Process: N/A

There is value in developing high level principles for countries to draft sanitary attestations, based on international best practice. **Such guidance would contribute to enabling harmonization of certificates and digital communications between competent authorities**

We supports the development of a new work proposal for this guidance, under CCFICS to be prioritized by the Committee with other agenda items underway.

Agenda Item 9: Review and update of Appendix A - the list of emerging global issues

Document Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/9](#), [CX/FICS 24/27/9 Add.1](#), [CX/FICS 24/27/9 Add.2](#)

Status in Codex Step Process: N/A

The process developed to review emerging issues and their contribution to inspiring new work is worthy of consideration.

It can be well used to support the development of new work priorities for CCFICS, while ensuring prioritization of these items under the agenda of the committee.

A. Agenda Item 2: Matters arising from the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies

Document Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/2](#)

Status in Codex Step Process: N/A

Background

Matters of specific importance:

1. CAC46 (2023) adopted at Step 5/8 the:

i. Guidelines on **Recognition and Maintenance of Equivalence of National Food Control Systems (NFCS)** (CXG 101-2023), noting that any further comments should be made in the context of the ongoing work on consolidating the Codex guidelines relating to equivalence; and

ii. Principles and Guidelines on the **Use of Remote Audit and Inspection in Regulatory Frameworks** (CXG 102-2023), noting that any proposed amendments or revision should be submitted to the next session of CCFICS for consideration.

Approval of new work

2. CAC46 approved new work on the revision and updating of the Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool within a Food Inspection and Certification System (CXG 60-2006).

Other issues

3. CAC46:

i. applauded the pace and responsiveness CCFICS had demonstrated regarding the work on the Principles and Guidelines on the Use of Remote Audit and Inspection in Regulatory Frameworks (CXG 102-2023).

ii. requested CCFICS to **prioritize completion of the work** on consolidation of the Codex guidelines related to equivalence.

4. CCEXEC86 (2024):

- ❖ Encouraged more Members to take leadership roles in committee working groups to ensure their sustainability and inclusiveness; while recognizing the challenges these Members may face and further encouraged the Codex Secretariat and experienced working group chairs to proactively seek engagement of other Members and provide guidance and support.
- ❖ Reminded Codex committees of the importance of good work management practices and prioritization of work to avoid the establishment of too many EWGs and the related burden on all concerned and ensure that agenda items can be adequately discussed within the available plenary session time.

Key Considerations

The matters for information provided are to be noted

B. Agenda Item 3: Information on activities of FAO and WHO and other international organizations relevant to the work of CCFICS

Document Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/3](#), [CX/FICS 24/27/3 Add.1](#)

Status in Codex Step Process: N/A

Background

This agenda item reports the tools produced by FAO and WHO and made available to Member States and the relevant activities carried out by FAO, WHO, UNIDO and others since the 26th Session of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export and Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS26). It included:

- ❖ The **FAO/WHO** Food Control System Assessment Tool; Early warning/alert and response to food safety emergencies; Food fraud related activities; World Food Safety Day; FAO guidance on risk based inspection; Support to countries and regional organisations to strengthen their food safety legislation; Activities with Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF); Regional and national activities.
 - ❖ The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (**UNIDO**) activities related to voluntary third-party assurance programmes (vTPA); Remote audit and verification; Application of prerequisite programmes in UNIDO implemented initiatives
 - ❖ The **WTO** SPS committee, TBT Committee and the Standards and Trade Development Facility (**STDF**) activities including Workshops and Thematic Sessions on Risk Communication, Misinformation, and Disinformation; workshop on transparency; thematic sessions on Digital Tools; Specific Trace Concerns; Operation and Implementation of the SPS Agreement (Operation of Transparency Provisions, Control, Inspection and Approval Procedures)
 - ❖ The Joint **FAO/AAEA** Centre of Nuclear Techniques has several publications on the use of isotopic and nuclear methods for the authentication of foods with Geographic Indications from various regions. The Food Safety and Control Laboratory (FSCL) of the Joint FAO/AAEA Centre has also published new methods of analysis, for example for rice authentication, and to detect sugar syrup addition in honey.
- The document outlines a broad and comprehensive effort to improve global food safety, control systems, emergency preparedness, and anti-fraud measures.

Key Considerations

The information provided is to be noted.

C. Agenda Item 4. Draft Consolidated Codex Guidelines related to Equivalence (Comments at Step 3)

Document Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/4 \(Add.1\)](#)

Status in the Codex Step Process: Step 3

Background

In 2018, at CCFICS24, the United States introduced a discussion paper aimed at consolidating existing Codex texts on the use of equivalence to reduce overlaps and inconsistencies, especially given the new "Guidelines on Recognition and Maintenance of Equivalence of National Food Control Systems." These guidelines were initiated at CCFICS23, finalized at CCFICS26, and adopted by CAC46 in 2023. CCFICS24 supported the consolidation proposal and established an electronic working group (EWG) chaired by the US, New Zealand, and Chile. The proposed new work was approved by CAC42.

The EWG identified the relevant Codex documents to review and merge for the consolidation. At CCFICS25 (2021), it was agreed that the work would proceed step by step, with the finalization of the "Guidelines on Recognition and Maintenance of Equivalence of National Food Control Systems" being prioritized before completing the consolidation text. The EWG was then re-established under the leadership of New Zealand, co-chaired by the US and Kenya, and continued refining the draft consolidated Codex guidelines on equivalence until CCFICS26 (2023). At CCFICS26, a physical working group revised the draft, based on feedback from members for further consideration.

During CCFICS26, sections 1-4 were reviewed and amended, while general comments were provided for the remaining sections. Due to time constraints, the full text could not be reviewed, and an EWG was re-established to prepare a revised draft for CCFICS27. Notably, CCFICS26 endorsed the draft "Guidelines on Recognition and Maintenance of Equivalence of National Food Control Systems" and recommended its advancement to Step 5/8, while also discussing the consolidation text, which had not yet incorporated the Step 5/8 document (CXG 101-2023). This situation caused confusion and inefficiencies at both the plenary and EWG levels.

Following CCFICS26, it was expected that the EWG Chair and co-chairs would update the consolidation draft with the Step 5/8 text. However, the version provided to the EWG did not reflect the adopted document. Instead, it introduced new concepts, not present in previous documents and reintroduced elements that had not achieved consensus at CCFICS24 and CCFICS25.

The EWG's report and a revised draft of the consolidated guidance were published on July 18, 2024, less than two months before CCFICS27, with a physical working group scheduled for the Sunday before the plenary session.

Key Considerations

We may wish to recognize the value in consolidating existing texts on equivalence. While there may be opportunities to update certain Codex texts during the consolidation, most of the existing documents remain relevant and contain important information that should be preserved in the new consolidated guidance.

Additionally, the "Guidelines on Recognition and Maintenance of Equivalence of National Food Control Systems," adopted by CAC46 in 2023, underwent extensive development.

However, the current draft of the consolidation does not always align with the 2023 document, instead incorporating elements from earlier versions, particularly the notion that "**unnecessary** impediments to trade" are the primary basis for determining equivalence.

The draft also includes new definitions, concepts, and unclear terminology that do not reflect the existing texts on equivalence.

Equivalence is a complex tool used to manage the risks of imported goods, serving various functions from setting trade conditions for high-risk products to optimizing inspection resources between importing and exporting countries. Addressing the current issues in the draft guidance on systems recognition will help the committee explore the diverse applications of equivalence as a risk management tool.

Conclusion

We may wish to emphasize that equivalence serves broader purposes beyond resolving trade disputes, a point that seems to be overlooked in the current draft.

We may wish to seek that substantial revisions be considered to align it with the 2023 document (CXG 101-2023) and remove content that exceeds existing guidance on equivalence.

D. Agenda Item 5: Draft Guidelines on the Prevention and Control of Food Fraud (Comments at Step 3)Document Number: CX/FICS 24/27/5 (Add.1)

Status in Codex Step Process: Step 3

Background

- ❖ **CCFICS24 (October 2018)** Initiated discussions on food integrity and authenticity and on the role of Codex, and particularly CCFICS, on added guidance to maintain food integrity and Authenticity – with a strong engagement from Codex membership
- ❖ **CCFICS25 (May-June 2021)** reviewed a discussion paper and a project document, making the case for new work: “Guidance on Food Fraud within the mandate of CCFICS” and recommended it to CAC44. CAC44 agreed to start such new work.
- ❖ **CCFICS26 (May 2023)** was the first meeting where the proposed text was discussed.
 - Issues covered included definitions, the need to ensure that a “risk-based” approach in the way the guidance is developed.
 - Questions remained on the way to cover issues related to Geographical Indications (GI), whether it was part of the scope – given that GI relate to Intellectual Property (IP)
 - Questions remained on whether language related to criminal offenses should be included in the guidelines
 - The Chair of CCFICS was to seek guidance from the Chair of CAC as to whether GI should be part of the Codex mandate / scope
- ❖ **CCFICS26** returned the draft to Step 2 and agreed to re-establish the EWG to draft the guidelines, considering comments made and items identified in square brackets.
- ❖ There is no response to date from the Chair of CAC on the **GI issue**
- ❖ **CCFICS27** is to examine a revised version of the draft text with emphasis on areas identified with questions by the EWG.
- ❖ Specific issues to be discussed include:
 - *Whether GI should be included in the scope*
 - *Whether feed for food-producing animals should be included within the scope of the draft guidelines*
 - *Whether to include “Criminal Offenses” in the draft guidelines*
 - *Definitions and the observance of a “risk-based” approach*

Key Considerations

- ❖ **Question 1: Whether para 6 Bis: “Fundamental to the successful functioning of any food fraud combatting strategy is the establishment and maintenance of anti-food fraud culture acknowledging the importance of**

human behaviors in protecting the integrity of the food supply chain and presenting food /feed in a manner so as not to deceive consumers:

- It is appreciated to have a mention of the promotion of an anti-food fraud culture, however this para would be further enhanced with the identification of the need to place “PREVENTION” at the heart of food fraud management, including the “anti-food fraud culture”.
- A proposed reformulation would be: “Fundamental to the successful functioning of any food fraud combatting strategy is the establishment and maintenance of **Prevention Measures including the propagation of** an anti-food fraud culture acknowledging the importance of human behaviors in protecting the integrity of the food supply chain and presenting food /feed in a manner so as not to deceive consumers.

❖ **Question 2: Item in square bracket - mentioning the impact of food safety in relation with feed - related activities:**

- Feed-related interventions are to be considered in Codex, when there is a clear impact on aspects pertaining to food within the mandate of Codex i.e., in relation to Safety and Quality.

It is therefore advised to retain a clarification related to how feed would be considered in the scope – and this would be in instances where there is an impact on food safety and quality (proposed phrasing: “**that may impact food safety and quality**”)

❖ **Question 3: What if Anything should be stated with respect to Geographical Indications (GI):**

It is important to note that issues related to Geographical Indications (GI) are **part of Intellectual Property (IP) considerations**.

- These issues, like other IP related issues are governed by the relevant treaties, agreements managed by the corresponding organizations such as the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) which covers intellectual property within the UN system or the agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), which is an international agreement in the WTO.
- **As a result, these issues are not within the Codex mandate, given that they refer to private interests, not deemed to be of global relevance.**
- **It is important therefore that the scope of the guidelines on food fraud exclude GI and other similar IP related issues pertaining to foods.**
- Interfering in this matter equates an intervention in the mandate of another international organization

❖ *Proposal to remove the footnote – and to include a mention in the body of the text to exclude matters related to IP. Issues related to Intellectual Property (IP) are excluded from this guideline*

❖ **Question 4: Should aspects related to the Investigation and Prosecution be included & 7bis: “The investigation and prosecution of food fraud offenses are outside of the scope of this guideline and need to be handled by countries under their respective laws”:**

- Prosecution of food related offenses are always within the mandate of national governments and is generally not mentioned as such in other codex texts – We Suggest to not retain this mention.

Insisting that matters ought to be dealt with, using a risk-based approach (mentioned elsewhere in the document) is more important.

- **Sections 3-4: No concern with the definition (subject to several discussions).**

A proposal to mention that a food a food fraud incident can be a combination of the examples listed.

This sentence could be added after the definitions of addition, substitution, dilution, counterfeiting, misrepresentation and concealment: ***“A Food Fraud incident can involve one or a combination of these actions.”***

❖ Section 5: Principles

- These principles are good and offer a general direction on interventions by FBOs and regulators to manage food fraud.

There is one notion that seems to be missing and that should be at the heart of any intervention – in line with Codex direction in CXG82-2013 (Principle 8: Focus on Prevention)

It is recommended to add a principle that could offer further direction of work on the development of practical guidance on food fraud management through prevention approaches either by CCFH or CCFICS.

Proposed Added Principle 3:

- Prevention of food fraud incidents should be at the Heart of interventions to manage food fraud by all stakeholders.

Principle 1:

- Lacks emphasis on Prevention at the heart of Food Fraud management – (this could further lead the way for action by Codex to develop dedicated guidance e.g. through CCFH leadership).
- Moreover, this area is covered by various texts of guidance of international partners: governments, private standards owners and it would be appreciated to have Codex develop a proposal in this area.
- A discussion paper could be further developed on this matter by a delegation and be introduced for consideration at an upcoming session of CCFICS.

❖ **Question 5: which phrasing in square brackets should be retained: “integrity of fair trade or “fair practices trade practices”**

- We would suggest to have the same phrasing related to the Codex mandate: **“and to promote fair food trade practices”**

❖ Section 6: Roles and Responsibilities

- No comments on para 9

- Para 10 – propose the mention of Vulnerability Assessment as part of preventive control tools to be applied by FBOs –
- b – Analyse and understand the vulnerabilities in their supply chain and products/ingredients/packaging that may be susceptible to food fraud, **“as part of the development of their preventive control strategies”**
- ❖ **Question 6: redundancies between para “b” bis and “e”**
 - There may be redundancies and we could take the latter part of the e and include it in b bis (“including having processes in place for rapid removal of affected product from the market).
- ❖ **Section 7: Relevant Activities for Competent Authorities**
 - No major changes proposed to this section
 - Emphasis should be made to promote the “preventive approach” and guidance in this regard as well as enabling tools.
 - Proposed strengthening of point e.
 - Providing practical guidance to FBOs and other stakeholders on how to address food fraud. Such guidance **should include the development of preventive controls, including the reliance on vulnerability assessment of their supply chain**, as well as all various resources and tools to support prevention, detection, mitigation and control of food fraud.
- ❖ **Section 8: Cooperation, Collaboration and Exchange of Information between Competent Authorities**
- ❖ **Question 7: Inclusion of 15 ter. On AI**
 - We suggest maintaining this para – but perhaps with a better positioning of what AI and machine learning would do – which is a better prediction of these incidents for better prevention.
 - A proposed wording would be:
 - **“Enhance collaboration to better integrate neutral technologies and use of data mining, including Artificial Intelligence, to support the development of predictive methodologies which can aid in more effectively preventing food fraud incidents.**

Conclusion

- ❖ Overall, a **good progress** in the development of this text.
- ❖ **We may wish to recommend** that a **better position of the “Preventive approach”** be better reflected at the heart of food fraud management strategies
- ❖ **We** may wish to offer that this important text be positioned **as a possible starting point to develop more practical guidance** on food fraud prevention – and preventive controls - this would be in response to the multiple guidance available elsewhere by private and public partners and where Codex would offer a more harmonized approach.

E. Agenda Item 6: Draft revision and updating of the Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification System (CXG 60-2006) (Comments at Step 3)

Document Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/6 \(Add.1\)](#)

Status in Codex Step Process: Step 3

Background

- ❖ **In 2006 Codex developed a text on Traceability:** CXG60-2006: Codex “Principles for Traceability/Product Tracing as a Tool Within a Food Inspection and Certification System” – with emphasis on tracing one step forward and one step backward.
- ❖ **Codex guidance** was used by many countries to guide their own traceability requirements.
- ❖ **Traceability is a key component** to support mitigation of food (safety and fraud) incidents – enabling a faster identification of incriminated products and their removal from chain.
- ❖ Progress was witnessed in the way **technology was being harnessed** to improve and modernize traceability systems
- ❖ **During CCFICS25 (2021)**, a discussion paper was introduced by the US and the UK to consider updating the existing Codex guidance: revisit fit for purpose and scope. An EWG was established to review the current guidance and make recommendations to CCFICS26. Information gathering from FBOs as to the technology platforms used to enhance traceability activities / practices
- ❖ **During CCFICS26 (2023)**, a discussion paper on the review and updates of CXG60-2006 was introduced, along with a project document related to a scope of the new work: revision and update of this guidance. CAC46 (2023) approved the new work
- ❖ **An EWG** co-led by the US, Australia, Ecuador, Honduras and the UK was created in 2023 and examined whether the current guidance:
 - Covered the entire chain,
 - Included the aspects of reliance on technology in the manner that current tools would allow to be harnessed
 - Included all the relevant responsibilities for FBOs,
 - Was incorporating the risk-based nature of the interventions
 - Had a good coverage of aspects related to communication in the context of managing traceability.
- ❖ **The EWG concluded that:**
 - The way the production chain covered: production, processing and distribution, **was complete enough** – a definition of food supply chain was however recommended to be developed
 - There was a **need to broaden the notion of “interoperability”** when it comes to exchange of information on traceability matters
 - **No consensus** was reached as to how risk would be factored in, in the document
- ❖ **A new draft was developed in June 2024 – with additional questions** as to:

- Whether reference to standard setting bodies IPPC, WOA and Codex should be explicitly mentioned, - Retained
- How the reference to feed, primary production and packaging would be made – Divergent opinions
- Whether a specific mention would be made to “Buyers” instead of FBOs – Not retained
- Whether specific guidance on a traceability “system” should be included – No need after all
- Whether to have better guidance on communication and cooperation. – new wording should be retained
- ❖ CCFICS27 will consider this document at **Step 4** – (currently at step 3) – **for the first time**
- ❖ EWG is recommending **to proceed to Step 5** after discussion

Key Considerations

- ❖ Emphasis on **how traceability can aid in more effective prevention and mitigation** of food incidents
- ❖ The Principles are more complete:
 - Position traceability well as a tool to extract the relevant information about sourcing and movement of ingredients and food
 - Re-iterating the minimum requirements of one step backward and one step forward
 - Further information on interoperability between systems: supporting the exchange of information throughout the food supply chain
 - Insistence on not making the systems developed not to be “trade-restrictive”
 - Importance to follow an outcome-based approach: not imposing a system of traceability (accepting systems based on objectives and outcomes between importing and exporting countries)
- ❖ **Section 15** of the legal requirements insists on the risk-based approach
- ❖ **Section 17** of the Good practice mentions the needs to adapt to the capabilities of developing countries and Section 19 – providing guidance on how “to assist” developing countries adapt to the requirements of importing countries
- ❖ **Important Sections on (Traceability) System Design:**
 - Necessity of being Technology Neutral, Outcome based and as much as possible relying on “**Standardized**” data aspects and possible reliance on other technology facilitated systems adopted by FBOs such as e-Certification.

Conclusion

- ❖ **We may wish to indicate** that the proposed text offers **progress and a good update to the existing guidance** – with a more practical considerations related to the adoption of “**Traceability Systems**” harnessing new technologies and accounting for the needs of developing countries.
- ❖ **Given that there does not seem to be major divergence between members** (based on the WG report) – **We may wish to recommend** this text proceeds to Step 5 after CCFICS27 discussions.

F. Agenda Item 7: Discussion paper on guidance on appeals mechanism in the context of rejection of imported foodDocument Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/7](#)

Status in Codex Step Process: N/A

Background

At CCFICS26, India introduced a CRD proposing new work to develop guidance on an appeals mechanism related to the rejection of imported food. The proposed guidelines would outline procedures for both exporting and importing countries, detailing the roles and responsibilities of their respective authorities within an appeal mechanism. While the proposal received general support, it was noted that further in-depth analysis on the subject was necessary. Nigeria agreed to assist India in developing a revised discussion paper.

During the inter-sessional webinar on emerging issues and potential new work, no comments were made when this topic was raised. It was noted that the issue would undergo a detailed discussion as a standalone agenda item (CX/FICS 24/27/7) and could therefore be removed from Appendix A (agenda item 9).

Key Considerations

- ❖ Appeal mechanisms are part of national mechanisms developed by countries as part of their control systems,
- ❖ Although guidance exists in CXG 25-1997 (Guidelines for the exchange of information between countries on rejection of imported food), such guidance does not cover specifically how countries can act to develop their own mechanism for appeal and for management of requests from exporting countries,
- ❖ The proposed guidance would be a useful addition to the guidance offered to countries on optimum conditions of management of import/export relationship, including the way such appeal mechanisms are to be set up and operated.

Conclusion

- ❖ **We may wish to recommended** that this new work proposal proceeds as a new work of CCFICS and be prioritized accordingly

G. Agenda Item 8: Discussion paper on the standardization of sanitary requirements

Document Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/8](#)

Status in Codex Step Process: N/A

Background

At **CCFICS26 (2023)**, Brazil introduced a discussion paper and a project proposal for new work on standardizing sanitary requirements for export certificates.

Brazil highlighted several challenges related to export certification, such as inconsistent requirements, repetitive information, a lack of transparency, and the impact on electronic certification. CCFICS26 welcomed the proposal, recognizing the complexity of the project, and supported launching a pilot project. It was suggested that this pilot focus on a single commodity to evaluate the feasibility of the proposal in comparison to other models, with an updated discussion paper and project document to be prepared for CCFICS27.

The pilot project, led by Brazil, focused on reviewing existing export certificates for dairy products (42 in total). It applied ontology principles, context-free grammar, natural language processing, and corpus linguistics, with the assistance of AI tools, to reduce the human effort required for analysis. The review process involved breaking down attestations into triplets (subject, predicate, object) through several automated iterations with human adjustments, resulting in the initial 1,281 triplets being reduced to a standardized set of items (53 subjects, 71 predicates, and 53 objects).

The pilot demonstrated that standardizing the writing of attestations could improve clarity, reduce complexity, **and enable automation in processing information**, thereby making international trade practices more efficient and reliable. It also highlighted the challenges of harmonizing knowledge and setting standards, which can be addressed through collaboration and the use of innovative technologies.

Key Considerations

- ❖ There is value in developing high level principles for countries to draft sanitary attestations, based on international best practice,
- ❖ This guidance would contribute to enabling harmonization of certificates and digital communications between competent authorities

Conclusion

- ❖ **We** may wish to recommend that this new work proposal proceeds as a new work of CCFICS and be prioritized accordingly

H. Agenda Item 9: Review and update of Appendix A - the list of emerging global issuesDocument Number: [CX/FICS 24/27/9](#), [CX/FICS 24/27/9 Add.1](#), [CX/FICS 24/27/9 Add.2](#)

Status in Codex Step Process: N/A

Background

- ❖ The identification and prioritization of emerging global issues for potential new work is now a regular agenda item at CCFICS.
- ❖ The UK, as the current lead for this agenda item, prepared a revised and updated list of emerging issues (referred to as "Appendix A") for discussion at the 27th Session. Feedback was provided in response to CL (2023/66-FICS) and at an intersessional workshop in May 2024.
- ❖ Norway, Australia, and the UK identified three new emerging issues:
 1. Increased use of establishment listings to support trade.
 2. Digitalization of aspects of national food control systems (NFCS).
 3. Greater use of digital tools, including artificial intelligence (AI).

The Key outcomes from the virtual intersessional workshop held in May 2024:

1. A refined and updated list of emerging issues (Appendix A) organized into three themes:
 - a. New and evolving systems and technologies in food production, processing, transport, and distribution – to be actively monitored.
 - b. The impact of new technologies and tools on training, food control systems, information sharing, and government regulation – pending discussions and decisions on two new proposals: establishment listings and NFCS digitalization.
 - c. The evolving role of competent authorities and interactions among government entities – no current work proposals associated with this theme.
2. It was agreed that Norway and Australia would collaborate with interested parties to develop discussion papers: Norway on establishment listings and Australia on NFCS digitalization, incorporating digital tools like AI.
3. The UK, with support from Australia, will organize a side event at CCFICS27 to raise awareness about the use of AI by regulators and industry.

CCFICS27 will review the updated list of emerging issues in Appendix A and discuss the new work proposals from Norway (CX/FICS 24/27/9.2) and Australia (CX/FICS 24/27/9.3).

Key Considerations

- ❖ The process that was used for considering proposals for new work, i.e., use intersessional webinars/working groups to prioritize work (rather than have these discussions during the meeting) is inclusive and collaborative. This process is to be commended.
- ❖ The revisions made to the list of new emerging global issues for consideration (“appendix A”) are very well presented and warrant support
- ❖ Undertaking new work on “digitalisation of NFCS”, as proposed by Australia is of great interest to several countries.
- ❖ The proposal on establishment listing proposed by Norway is worthy of consideration, and would benefit from not being a standalone guidance, but rather a set of principles appended to an existing text.

Conclusion

- ❖ The exercise aiming to review emerging issues and their contribution to inspiring new work is worthy of consideration.
- ❖ It can be well used to support the development of new work priorities for CCFICS, while ensuring prioritization of these items under the agenda of the committee.