



JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

Codex Alimentarius Commission

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE

CODEx WORK RELEVANT TO THE WTO/TBT AGREEMENT

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CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION: What it is

**Intergovernmental food standards-setting body established by
FAO and WHO (1963)**

- **Members (countries)**
 - 188 Member countries
 - 1 Member Organization (European Union - EU)
- **Observers (organizations)**
 - UN Agencies e.g. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
 - International intergovernmental organizations e.g. Cooperation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
 - International non-governmental organizations e.g. CropLife International



CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION: Mandate

- Protect consumers' health
- Ensure fair trade practices
- Coordinate work on food standards with other international organizations (international governmental and non governmental organizations)
- Develop and maintain the **CODEX ALIMENTARIUS** → the body of standards and related texts adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission

Dual Objective

Facilitate
international trade



CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION: Structure

- Executive Committee
- Worldwide Subsidiary Bodies
 - General/Horizontal Committees → all foods **SPS** > **TBT** or **SPS/TBT**
 - Commodity/Vertical Committees → specific foods or food groups **TBT**
 - Task Forces → all foods or food groups **SPS** or **TBT** or **SPS/TBT**
- Regional Subsidiary Bodies
 - Regional Coordinating Committees (RCCs) →
FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Asia (CCASIA)
 - Regional standards and related texts → **SPS** or **TBT** or **SPS/TBT**
regional commodity standards = TBT

Procedure for the Elaboration of Standards

Regular

The CAC decides to elaborate a new text based on the proposal of the Committee i.e. Project Document and the Critical Review of the CCEXEC

STEP 1

The Lead Country develops a proposed draft text e.g. usually through an Electronic Working Group

STEP 2

The Codex Secretariat circulates the proposed draft text for technical comments to members and observers

STEP 3

The Committee considers the proposed draft text based on comments submitted to recommend adoption by CAC at Step 5

STEP 4

The CAC adopts the proposed draft text as draft text based on the proposal of the Committee, the comments submitted on the suitability of the text for adoption at Step 5 and the Critical Review of CCEXEC

STEP 5

The Codex Secretariat circulates the draft text for technical comments to members and observers

STEP 6

The Committee considers the draft text based on the technical comments submitted to recommend adoption at Step 8 as final text

STEP 7

The CAC adopts the draft text as a final text based on the proposal of the Committee, the comments submitted on the suitability of the text for final adoption and the Critical Review of the CCEXEC

STEP 8



Consideration in the development of a standard or related text

- * Scientific / technical basis
- * Economic considerations
- * Consensus when possible
- * Voting – rare lower acceptance of standards



Omission → Steps 6 and 7

STEP 5/8
CAC adopts the proposed draft text at Step 5/8 as final text based on the proposal of the Committee, the comments submitted on the suitability of the text for adoption at 5/8 (final adoption) and the Critical Review of CCEXEC

Accelerated

The CAC decides to elaborate a new text based on the proposal of the Committee i.e. Project Document and the Critical Review of the CCEXEC

STEP 1

The Lead Country develops a proposed draft text e.g. usually through an Electronic Working Group

STEP 2

The Codex Secretariat circulate the proposed draft text for technical comments to members and observers

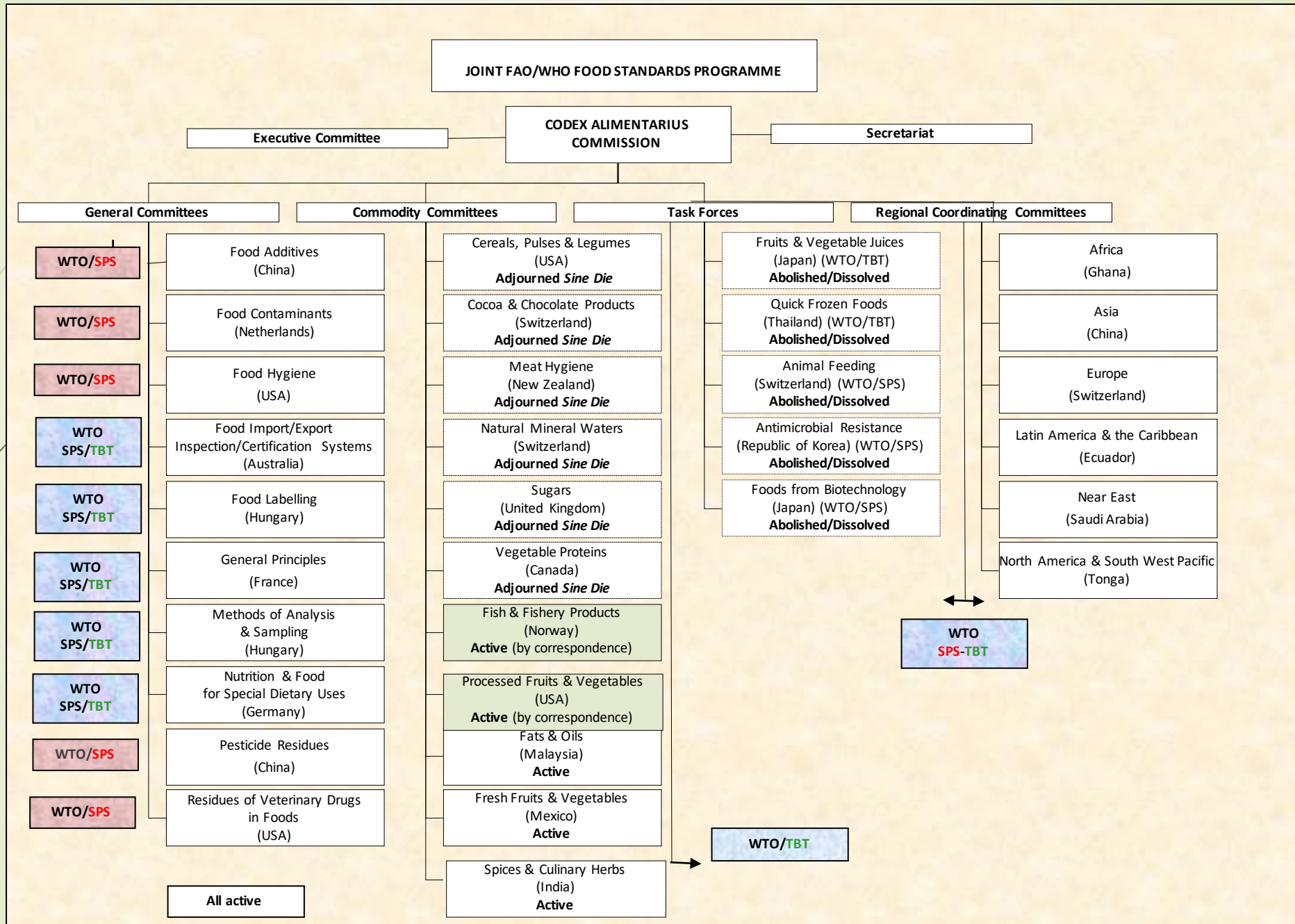
STEP 3

The Committee considers the draft text based on the technical comments submitted to recommend adoption at Step 5 as final text

STEP 4

The CAC adopts the proposed draft text at Step 5 as final text based on the proposal of the Committee, the comments submitted on the suitability of the text for final adoption at Step 5 and the Critical Review of CCEXEC

STEP 5





Codex work on TBT issues: Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL)

Recently adopted texts

- Front-of-pack nutrition labelling (FOPNL) – nutrition labelling
Guidelines on front-of-pack nutrition labelling as an annex to the *Guidelines on nutrition labelling* (CXG 2 -1985)
- Labelling of non-retail containers
General standard for the labelling of non-retail containers of foods (CXS 346 -2021)

Ongoing discussion (amongst others)

- Supplementary text on internet sales / e-commerce (in Step process)
- Precautionary allergen labelling – guidance (in Step process)
- Guidelines on innovation – use of technology in food labelling (new work – in Step process)
- Food labelling exemptions in emergency situations (discussion paper)
- Sustainability claims (discussion paper)

Codex work on TBT issues:

Codex Committee on Food Import/Export Inspection/Certification Systems (CCFICS)

Recently adopted texts

- Electronic certificates
Guidance on paperless use of electronic certificates (revised *Guidelines for Design, Production, Issuance and Use of Generic Official Certificates* (CXG 38-2001))
- Voluntary Third-Party Assurance (vTPA) programs
Principles and Guidelines for the Assessment and use of voluntary Third-Party Assurance (vTPA) programs (CXG 93-2021)
- National Food Control Systems
Principles and Guidelines for Monitoring the Performance of National Food Control Systems (CXG 91-2017)

Ongoing discussion

- Consolidated equivalence texts for inspection/certification including recognition and maintenance of equivalence of national food control systems
- Food fraud in the framework of inspection/certification and food safety/fair practices in trade
- Use of ICT tools in regulatory frameworks
- Traceability and product tracing as part of the NFCs

Codex work on TBT issues: Commodity committees

Commercial quality standards

- product definition and
- description = essential composition and quality factors
- including labelling and analytical procedures for compliance with provisions in the standard

Type of commodity standards

- Single or group (general) standards

Commodity groups (non-exhaustive examples)



Cereals, Pulses and Legumes

Cocoa & Cocoa Products

Fats and Oils

Fish and Fishery Products



Milk and Milk Products

Sugars and Honey

Vegetable Proteins

Waters



Fruits and vegetables (processed & fresh)



Codex work on TBT issues: Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling(CCMAS)

- Methods of analysis
 - Standard for methods of analysis and sampling (CXS 234 – 1999)
 - Involves update and review
 - Addition of new methods of analysis
 - **Important for assessment with provisions in Codex commodity standards**
- Sampling plans
 - Revision of the General Guidelines on Sampling (CXG 50 – 2004)
- Other texts of relevance
 - Guidelines for Settling Disputes on Analytical (Test) Results (CXG 70 – 2009)

For further information

Codex website

<https://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/en/>

Codex email

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CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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