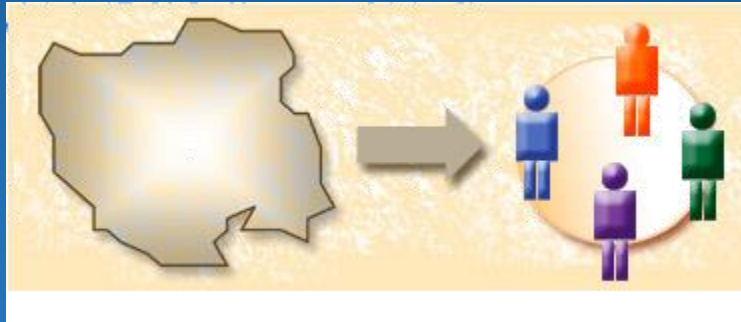




ENHANCING PARTICIPATION IN CODEX ACTIVITIES

- SELECTING NATIONAL DELEGATIONS -

Introduction



There are a number of factors that may affect the selection process of a **national delegation**.



When the **delegation consists of one person only**, the selection process become even more critical.

Formation of National Delegations – Process

- **The process used to form national delegations varies from country to country. Some common elements of these processes are:**

1. The Codex Contact Point solicits nominations from senior-level managers of departments or agencies active in the national Codex programme.

2. The government endorses the nomination submitted.

3. The nominee's appointment together with the delegate's obligations and funding arrangements may be confirmed in writing if desired.

Formation of National Delegations – Criteria

○ **Criteria to be applied during the selection process of national delegates:**

- ✓ **Terms of reference of the Codex meeting for which the individual is being selected;**
- ✓ **Position held within a ministry/department with primary responsibility for the specific Codex meeting;**
- ✓ **Technical expertise of the individual in the subject matter of the relevant Codex meeting;**
- ✓ **Degree of experience or involvement in previous Codex activities;**
- ✓ **Other factors.**

Formation of National Delegations – Criteria (2)

- **Members of a national delegation would fall under one of the following two categories:**

1. Head delegate

2. Advisor

Naturally, if a country's delegation consisted of one individual, that individual would be the head delegate by default.



Participation of Non-Government Advisors

It's not unusual to have on a delegation **non-government representatives** (selected due to their **technical expertise within industry and academia**)

- **When deciding on such representatives, the following criteria, similar to those used to select government officials, should be applied:**

- Terms of reference of the Codex meeting for which the individual is being selected;
- Technical expertise of the individual in the subject matter of the relevant Codex meeting;
- Degree of experience or involvement in previous Codex activities;
- Other factors.

Responsibilities and Obligations of Delegations

- Members of a national delegation to attend Codex sessions have the following **responsibilities and obligations**:

- 1. Delegations participate in Codex sessions in accordance with the Codex Procedural Manual, Guidelines for Codex committees and intergovernmental task forces, including Conduct of meetings. It is the responsibility of all delegates to become familiar with the contents of this Procedural Manual.**



Responsibilities and Obligations of Delegations (2)

...Other **responsibilities and obligations**:

2. Delegates are expected to attend all plenary sessions and any meetings convened by the head delegate.
3. Generally, advisors should not negotiate on behalf of their country's government, and should only do so with the express permission of the head delegate.

An effective delegation should be well-managed and coordinated by the head delegate.

Responsibilities and Obligations of Delegations (3)

...Other **responsibilities and obligations**:

4. An individual is registered as a member of a delegation, and **can only be a member of one delegation.**



5. Members of the delegation are not immune from any laws or regulations of their country or the host country as a result of participation on a delegation.



Specifics of Non-Governmental (NGO) Advisors

NGO advisors must work towards the overall objective of the delegation...

If, during informal discussions, NGO advisors express **views that differ from the official country position**, they must clearly indicate that these views are their own.



NGO delegates should **advise the head delegate** of the **concerns of the organization they represent**.



NGO advisors in particular should exercise discretion to ensure that their **activities are not prejudicial to the effectiveness of the delegation**.



Head Delegate

All delegations have a Head Delegate who has overall responsibility for the functioning of the delegation before, during and after the relevant Codex meeting.

- **Where a delegation consists of only one individual, by default that individual is the head delegate.**
- **The head delegate is the main speaker presenting the country's views and position on issues under discussion.**



Head Delegate – Responsibilities

1. Strives to ensure the formation of a delegation of government officials and NGO representatives with an interest in, and expertise relevant to, the TOR of the committee, as well as the items on the provisional agenda.
2. Ensures that draft positions are prepared for each agenda item, in consultation with the National Codex Committee (or its equivalent).
3. Conducts a discussion of the draft positions on each agenda item with officials from other countries that may share common views.
4. Presents the draft positions for each agenda item to the National Codex Committee (or its equivalent) for review, amendment as necessary and endorsement.

Head Delegate – Responsibilities (2)

5. Provides copies of the final draft positions to: (a) the CCP, (b) each member of the delegation, (c) all interested stakeholder organizations, (d) the designated contacts in other countries as appropriate.

6. Presents, defends and promotes the positions on each agenda item to the Codex committee, taking into account issues raised by other delegations while ensuring consistency with national policy.

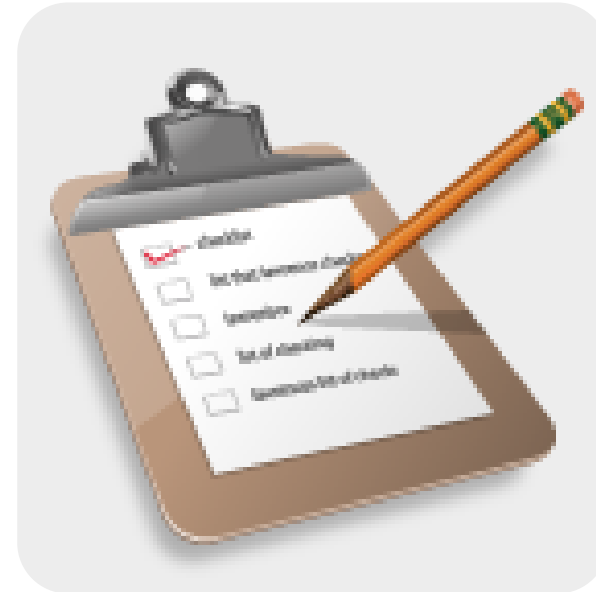
7. On return to the country, prepares a report on the outcome of the session for the CCP and the NCC. All members of the delegation should endorse the final delegation report.

8. Continues to coordinate preparation of responses to circular letters issued with respect to the committee, with consultation on the draft positions, as appropriate. The reply should be submitted to the Codex Secretariat via the CCP, and presented to the NCC for information.

Head Delegate – Responsibilities (3)

There are some considerations which should be taken into account **by head delegates** and others involved in preparing country positions.

These considerations concern the **activities in preparation, during and after the Codex session.**



These considerations are not exhaustive, neither are all points applicable to all delegations all the time. However, they provide a useful checklist to which head delegates and others can refer for guidance on Codex activities.

Attending Codex Meetings

Upon departure, attendees are advised to have in their possession:

- ✓ Travel information, weather and currency information.
- ✓ Official invitation letter to the government to attend the Codex session, and official letter sent from your country notifying the Codex and host country secretariats of the composition of the national delegation.
- ✓ Report of the last committee session and report of the head of delegation.
- ✓ A copy of the Codex Procedural Manual.
- ✓ Country position on relevant agenda items and related comments.
- ✓ Agenda of the session.
- ✓ All related working documents, as these may not be available in sufficient quantity at the meeting.
- ✓ All other relevant documents such as the report of the last Commission session.

Summary

- In the process countries use to form national delegations, there are some common elements, such as soliciting nominations from senior-level managers, endorsement by the government, confirmation of the nominee's appointment together with delegate's obligations and funding arrangements.
- A country delegation may consist of several members such as: the head delegate, advisors (i.e. a government official, a non-government representatives). Often a delegation will consist of one person only, which by default would be the head delegate.
- Members of a national delegation have precise responsibilities and obligations, such as: (a) become familiar with the Procedural Manual, (b) attend all plenary sessions and any meetings convened by the head delegate, (c) can't serve concurrently during a Codex session as a member of more than one delegation, etc.
- The head delegate has overall responsibility for the functioning of the delegation before, during and after the Codex meeting.
- Whoever is involved in preparing country positions should take into account some considerations and useful tips concerning the activities in preparation, during and after the Codex session.



GFRSS | GLOBAL FOOD REGULATORY
SCIENCE SOCIETY