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The Western Pacific Region is home to more than 1.8 billion people, nearly one third of the world’s population. The Region stretches over a vast area, from Mongolia and China in the north and west, to New Zealand in the south and French Polynesia in the east, and spans a tremendous diversity of nations, from some of the world’s smallest and least developed to highly developed and rapidly emerging countries.

Foodborne disease and food contamination continue to be significant public health issues across the Western Pacific Region. More than 200 diseases are spread through unsafe food, ranging from diarrhoeal diseases to various forms of cancer.

Foodborne disease outbreaks and food contamination events that only affected local communities in the past can now quickly become global health threats with the increasing levels of international travel and trade of food.

Outbreaks of foodborne disease have had devastating health and economic consequences in both developed and developing countries and can impede the achievement of Millennium Development Goals 1 and 4, to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger and reduce child mortality, respectively.

Food safety also contributes significantly to the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases and undernutrition. Through the development of food standards and the strengthening of food inspection and enforcement, national food control systems can reduce the extensive public health, social and economic consequences of these diseases.

In light of these issues, the Western Pacific Regional Food Safety Strategy (2011–2015) was endorsed by all Member States at the sixty-second session of the WHO Western Pacific Regional Committee in 2011. The Committee urged Member States to use the strategy to strengthen national food control systems to protect public health, prevent fraud, avoid food adulteration and facilitate safe and healthy food.

I too urge Member States to take action now on these critical issues to help improve the health of all through safe and healthy food.

Shin Young-soo, MD, Ph.D.
Regional Director
Access to sufficient, nutritionally adequate and safe food is a basic human right. This right, however, is threatened by foodborne disease and food contamination, two growing public health concerns in both developed and developing countries. Diarrhoeal diseases, a significant proportion of which are foodborne, kill approximately 2.2 million people annually. Other causes of foodborne disease, such as chemical contamination, are a further burden not included in this estimate. Additionally, micronutrient deficiencies and noncommunicable diseases continue to have extensive public health, social and economic consequences.

The globalization of the world’s food supply has created complex challenges for those managing food safety, with the realization that food that may have caused a local outbreak, may grow into an event of international concern. The World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other partners have a long history in promoting and assisting with the development of national food control systems to help ensure the safety of food.

This Western Pacific Regional Food Safety Strategy (2011–2015) considers progress made to date and identifies priority strategic actions required in the Member States of the WHO Western Pacific Region to help ensure safe and healthy food to reduce the risk of food contamination and foodborne diseases and also to address the double burden of micronutrient deficiencies and noncommunicable diseases. Not all strategic actions included in this strategy will be put in place by each Member State over the next five years, as this is dependent on the initial stage of development in a Member State and on the resources available. While it is commonly accepted that the vision, goal and many strategic actions of the strategy will have a life span beyond 2015, a five-year time frame has been used to allow for regular evaluation of
progress made through use of the indicators and also possible future changes to the strategy. In addition, the different elements of the strategy are not expected to be implemented at the same time, as some are dependent on others being in place. The strategy also highlights the importance of collaboration, not only in and between Member States, but also between WHO, FAO, the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation’s (APEC) Food Safety Cooperation Forum, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations’ (ASEAN) Food Safety Improvement Plan and Food Secure Pacific Framework for Action, and the associated Regional Trade Facilitation Programme to help Member States to carry out the priority actions.
In order to strengthen national food control systems, countries and areas will have taken measures, appropriate to their national situations, to ensure food safety is addressed:

(a) through improved food control and coordination throughout the food chain continuum and adequate funding;

(b) by building and optimizing risk-based regulatory frameworks;

(c) through improved availability of food safety data to better guide policy and risk analysis;

(d) by strengthening the capacity of inspection services to effectively enforce legislation;

(e) through effective food safety training and education; and

(f) by increasing the capacity to detect, assess and manage food safety incidents and emergencies.

In order to facilitate active collaboration between countries and areas and also between agencies working to assist national governments, measures will be taken by countries, areas and agencies, as appropriate:

(a) to minimize differences between regulatory frameworks, where such differences are unnecessary, to protect the health of people;

(b) to optimize the sharing of food safety information;

(c) to implement effective cooperation between developing and developed countries, as well as among developing countries; and

(d) to facilitate effective collaboration between agencies working to assist national governments to make the best use of resources.
1. Improved Food Control and Coordination throughout the Food Chain Continuum and Adequate Funding

1.1 Background

An effective national food control system is essential to protect public health, prevent fraud, avoid food adulteration and facilitate safe and healthy food, and relevant, up-to-date and enforceable food legislation is an essential part of a modern food control system. Sound laws and regulations are essential to create an enabling and predictable environment in which to develop and enforce food safety measures based on risk analysis, including risk assessment, risk management and risk communications. Food legislation protects the rights of consumers and defines the responsibilities of food producers, processors, manufacturers, traders and consumers, helping to ensure that food is safe, wholesome and fit for human consumption. Food laws and regulations also establish clear, appropriate and fair rules that facilitate trade in food and protect consumers from fraudulent practices.

The aspirations of governments in the area of food safety policy are commonly defined in food legislation. Modern food laws and regulations need to cover the whole food chain, including production, processing and marketing. Food legislation needs to include provisions to base the national food control system on sound science and on the principles of risk analysis.

Food legislation should ensure that adequate financial resources are available to provide the necessary experienced staff and other resources for the implementation of official controls. In order to support official food controls, food legislation should also include provisions for either establishing a food laboratory network, including national reference laboratories for food monitoring and surveillance, or setting up mechanisms by which food control authorities can access an available food laboratory network. This will necessitate the allocation of central government funding, which may be offset by establishing fees or charges for official food control services.
An effective food control system requires coordinated management throughout the food chain continuum. Regulatory control of food safety is usually a responsibility shared among national, regional and local government authorities, and commitment to cooperation among all these players is essential. Food legislation, or national policy, should include unambiguous provisions that describe how these different bodies cooperate and collaborate to ensure the consistent implementation of food safety controls, and the functions and powers of all agencies involved in food control need to be clearly defined in the legislation. Furthermore, where relevant, food safety policy should be integrated with other policy areas to facilitate multisectoral action towards food safety concerns.

Experience in enforcement of food regulations internationally shows that the best standards of consumer protection are achieved when there is a separation between the national bodies that are in charge of producing food policy and legislation and those that are responsible for implementing and enforcing that legislation. Additionally, experience has demonstrated that consumers are best protected when there is a clear separation between the national agencies that are responsible for promoting and supporting the food sector and those charged with food control.
1.2 Strategic direction

Improve coordination of the management of food control by updating and modernizing food legislation and/or formal policy agreements so that unambiguous provisions describe how the different national bodies and agencies should cooperate and collaborate to ensure the consistent implementation of food safety controls and how these same bodies and agencies will be adequately resourced to effectively implement food control.

1.3 Strategic actions

National food control authorities, in partnership with other key stakeholders, will carry out the following strategic actions:

1. Review the nature, scope and substance of policy, laws, regulations and standards related to food and how the existing laws and regulations (at central, regional and local levels) govern the production, processing, handling, distribution, import/export and sale of food.

2. For gaps identified in laws, regulations and standards, introduce appropriate measures.

3. Establish in legislation, or by formal policy agreement, a coordination mechanism to oversee food safety throughout the food chain continuum.

4. Ensure that adequate financial resources are made available to provide the necessary staff and other resources for effective implementation of official controls.

1.4 Indicator

Legislation enacted, or a formal policy agreement in place, that includes provisions for setting up a coordination mechanism to oversee food safety throughout the food chain continuum and adequate financial resources in all Member States of the WHO Western Pacific Region.
2. Risk-Based Regulatory Frameworks

2.1 Background

Collaboration of all stakeholders along the food chain continuum is essential to ensure a comprehensive and integrated approach to safe and healthy food. In recent years, food production, processing and marketing systems have grown more complex and the length of the food chain continuum has expanded globally.

The primary responsibility for the production of safe food is that of food businesses. Each food business must ensure that control systems are in place to prevent, eliminate or reduce risks to consumers to acceptable levels at all stages of the food chain continuum for which they have responsibility, and that legislative requirements are met by such systems.

To complement and support the efforts of food businesses, national governments must organize and implement adequate and effective regulatory frameworks. Regulatory frameworks include: (1) primary legislation that includes definitions, roles and responsibilities, and also the principles of food control; (2) food regulations and standards that define the rules that regulate the production, processing, storage, distribution, marketing, import/export and sale of food, reflecting food safety, noncommunicable disease and micronutrient deficiency issues; and (3) codes of practice that assist food businesses in implementing the regulations and standards by identifying acceptable controls.
Controls that act as incentives to food businesses, such as scoring systems and risk-based inspection frequencies, are effective in influencing food businesses to control the safety of their food. It is therefore essential that food businesses, at all levels, engage in proactive dialogue with regulatory bodies to agree on food safety regulations and standards and ensure efficient and effective integration of industry and official food control systems.

A key role of government departments and agencies is to develop regulatory and non-regulatory measures to protect public health and consumer interests and to facilitate trade. The development of food regulatory measures should be based on the best available scientific evidence and data, and should be managed and communicated appropriately. Risk analysis frameworks are commonly used at national and international levels as the basis for developing food regulations and standards.

A risk analysis framework provides a structured way of examining and incorporating the wide variety of factors that impact on the decision-making process and enables regulators to identify, assess, manage and communicate food-related health risks (including foodborne disease, micronutrient deficiencies and noncommunicable disease) throughout the food chain continuum. Risk analysis can be used across a broad range of circumstances and can lead to effective management strategies, even when available data are limited. Risk communication is an essential means for sharing information on hazards and risks among all interested parties.
2.2 Strategic direction

Focus industry and official food control systems and actions on the assurance that consumers have access to safe and healthy food; robust regulatory frameworks will be developed based on risk analysis and a broad consultative process.

2.3 Strategic actions

National food control authorities, in partnership with other key stakeholders, will carry out the following strategic actions:

(1) Strengthen the development of risk-based regulatory frameworks and encourage partnerships with all relevant stakeholders, through the following steps:

(a) Review, revise and consult on food regulations and standards to ensure that they are risk-based, consistent with internationally developed and agreed standards, such as those of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and OIE, and facilitate the trade of safe and healthy food.

(b) Develop codes of practice, guidance documents and training materials on legislation (laws, regulations and standards) for distribution to all relevant stakeholders to ensure effective and consistent enforcement nationally.

(2) Strengthen the capability of food control authorities in the area of risk communications by developing risk communications strategies and enhancing the expertise and skills of food safety professionals.

The OIE and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) are two of the three international standard-setting organizations recognized under the World Trade Organization’s Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement). In the context of the SPS Agreement, the OIE is responsible for setting standards in the domain of animal health (including zoonotic diseases) and the CAC in the domain of food safety.
(3) Facilitate the sharing of experiences on the development of risk-based regulatory frameworks among countries and areas through a diversity of mechanisms, including existing regional networks such as ASEAN forums, the APEC Food Safety Cooperation Forum, and the Pacific Food Safety and Quality Legislation Expert Group.

(4) Contribute to risk-based imported food control through the sharing of information on offshore assurances between countries and areas.

(5) Strengthen Codex participation through mentoring programmes that match up countries that have a well-developed process for contributing to the work of Codex and countries that are still developing such a process.

(6) Where possible, use the same risk-based frameworks to assist in addressing dietary/nutritional issues, such as micronutrient deficiencies and noncommunicable diseases, including:

(a) supporting micronutrient fortification of specific foods; and

(b) working in partnership with the relevant food sectors on initiatives to reduce the fat, sugar and salt content of foods.

2.4 Indicators

(1) Risk-based food safety regulatory frameworks in place in Member States of the WHO Western Pacific Region.

(2) Risk communications mechanisms in place for the interactive exchange of information between stakeholders in Member States of the WHO Western Pacific Region.
3. Improved Availability of Food Safety Data to Better Guide Policy and Risk Analysis

3.1 Background

Modern food control systems, in order to be efficient, rely increasingly on the availability and use of data and information on foodborne disease and food contamination (pathogens, toxins and harmful chemicals), as well as data on the performance of controls throughout the food chain.

Access to reliable and current intelligence on the incidence of foodborne disease is critical. Therefore, it is essential that effective links are established between food control agencies and the public health system. In this way, information on food contamination from food monitoring can be linked with foodborne disease data, and can lead to early warning and appropriate risk-based food control policies. Essential information includes annual incidence trends, identification of susceptible population groups, identification of hazardous foods (including ingredients and food-producing animals), and identification and tracing of causes of foodborne diseases. Only with such information can the aspects of hazard identification, hazard characterization, exposure assessment and risk characterization—integral to a sound scientific risk assessment—be achieved, and only through a sound scientific risk assessment can effective risk reduction measures be identified. Additionally, the data can also be used to monitor the effective implementation and impact of such control measures.

The credibility of a national food control system depends on the quality of data and on the capabilities of those within the system to analyse and act upon those data. Being able to make the most of limited data by performing trend analysis, modelling and forecasting has become equally important in reducing the currently large burden of foodborne disease and facilitating an increasingly global food trade.

Having access to laboratories that can detect, identify and quantify a country’s priority hazards, that have effective analytical quality assurance programmes, and that have been accredited by an appropriate accreditation agency, is an essential component of a food control system. Such laboratories may be either public or private and may be within a country’s borders or outside, but they must be...
readily accessible when urgent analyses are required. Considerable capital investment is needed to establish, maintain and operate laboratories. Therefore careful planning is necessary to achieve optimum results. The quantity and locations of the laboratories should be determined in relation to the objectives of the system and the volume of work. Resources should not be wasted by creating underutilized laboratory services.

3.2 Strategic direction
Introduce a systematic effort to collect, analyse and interpret data on food contaminants and food consumption and establish effective links with the public health system to improve the availability of attributable data on foodborne disease.

3.3 Strategic actions
National food control authorities, in partnership with other key stakeholders, will carry out the following strategic actions:

(1) Establish effective links with the public health system to improve the availability of attributable data on foodborne disease through event-based and indicator-based surveillance.

(2) Establish effective links between different data sources to facilitate the assessment of combined data and increase efforts to share data between agencies and internationally, where it is appropriate to do so, for improved risk management.

(3) Develop the capacity to conduct studies on the burden of foodborne disease and share data obtained from any completed studies for strengthened national risk analysis and advocacy for food safety.

(4) Strengthen the capacity of designated national agencies to conduct targeted food consumption surveillance and to monitor food hazards of public health significance through national food contaminant and residue monitoring programmes, including total diet studies.
(5) Establish, or identify through mapping, a network of food laboratories (within or outside national borders) with the capacity to detect, identify and quantify chemical and microbiological hazards to support national and international risk assessment efforts.

3.4 Indicators

(1) Links established with the public health system to improve the availability of data on foodborne disease through event-based surveillance and indicator-based surveillance in all Member States of the WHO Western Pacific Region.

(2) A plan and a programme of work for collecting, analysing, interpreting and applying food safety data to improve the management of risks associated with priority hazards are in place in all Member States of the WHO Western Pacific Region.
4. Inspection Services

4.1 Background

Food inspection is a critical component of a national food control system, as it aims to ensure that food being sold meets the safety requirements defined by food legislation. To meet this aim, food inspectors must be qualified, trained, efficient, honest and transparent in their activities. Modern food inspections incorporate risk, so that efforts are focused on food businesses who are most likely to provide unsafe food and also uncontrolled hazards of greatest public health concern, and so that the inspectors’ actions will have the greatest impact on the safety of food sold.

Food inspectors are often the face of a national food control system for the food industry and the public. Therefore their training is critical and must be reflective of food inspection needs. To this end, FAO and WHO advocate that proper training of food inspectors is a prerequisite for an efficient food control system. The development of food inspectors’ capacities is reliant on partnerships between national food control authorities and institutes that can offer specialized training. Up-to-date food safety information can be integrated into the training programme.

Food inspectors operate within food inspection services. The following components support the inspection process and ensure effective, non-biased, credible inspections: adequate resources; in-service training on emergent food safety issues and new concepts in food safety; food business training and consultation on inspection requirements and priority food safety issues; standard operating procedures for undertaking inspections, including defining priority issues for inspection; process for defining risk-based inspection frequencies; audit of inspection activities; record management of previous inspections and corrective follow-up action; legal support; calibration processes between inspectors to ensure consistency and as a means of training and access to legislation; inspection equipment; and laboratory services.
Food inspection services can be strengthened at all levels of government by utilizing internationally recognized standards, guidelines and approaches; learning from other Member States’ services; and implementing consistent actions across all national agencies responsible for food safety, while avoiding duplication and gaps in inspection services across the food chain continuum.

4.2 Strategic direction

Establish competent food control authorities as independent and trusted public health bodies, and contribute to effective national food control systems through the strengthening of risk-based food inspection services.

4.3 Strategic actions

National food control authorities, in partnership with other key stakeholders, will carry out the following strategic actions:

(1) On a regional and national basis, identify core competencies for food inspection, reflecting inspection needs throughout the food chain continuum (including imported food), and for specific non-routine activities (e.g. foodborne disease outbreaks, food recalls and mass gatherings). Build on existing courses, strengthen training courses for food inspectors and develop in-service training programmes for current inspectors to reflect core competencies, and include training requirements in national legislation.

(2) Noting the challenges for Pacific island countries and other countries that cannot sustain a national training institute, develop a subregional approach for delivery of the required training.

(3) Undertake a national critical review to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas of improvement required in food inspection services and take action on priority areas of improvement.
(4) Ensure continual upgrading of the skills of food inspectors through in-service training and further development of food inspection services through sharing of experiences at regional and subregional meetings and other forums.

(5) Building on existing platforms, participate in networks of relevant training institutes and food control authorities to gather input on the above actions.

4.4 Indicators

(1) Food inspector training programmes, reflecting core competencies, are required by national legislation and are implemented in Member States of the WHO Western Pacific Region.

(2) Increased uptake of the use of risk-based food inspection systems in place in Member States of the WHO Western Pacific Region.
5. Food Safety Training and Education

5.1 Background

Food safety training and education are important contributors in raising people’s awareness of food safety issues and increasing the capacity of people to handle food more safely and to make healthier food choices.

To enhance food safety awareness, a range of strategies can be undertaken by food safety control authorities, including web-based consumer awareness strategies; intensive awareness-raising campaigns, such as food safety awareness weeks or months; and campaigns carried out through existing community mechanisms and/or use of the media.

To impact on food handling behaviours, however, food safety education and training should be based on a better understanding of the underlying social determinants and food-related behaviours, as well as on clear identification of potential hazards and their control measures. Following these initial steps, food safety trainers and educators also need to apply optimum behaviour-impact education processes, including the prioritization of behaviours for change. Furthermore, if food safety education is to achieve its goal, programmes must be targeted at, and constructed for, particular audiences.

Efforts to enhance food safety education and training should also be focused on specific at-risk population groups and food businesses employed in the handling of high-risk foods. At-risk groups that are education priorities include women who are pregnant or caring for infants, as well as those caring for the elderly and chronically ill. Children, too, must be targeted. To increase safe food handling among children, food safety needs to become a key element within school curricula, be an integral part of school policies, and be central to the provision of food to schoolchildren. Producers, processors,
food handlers, food retailers, food traders and those preparing food for and caring for vulnerable populations also all need to understand the factors that can influence the safety of the food they handle, as well as their moral responsibility to ensure the safety of any raw material, semi-processed material, ingredient, additive or food during their care of it.

Partnerships with training programmes and initiatives already in place for identified priority audiences should be utilized as an effective means of delivering training (such as Healthy School programmes and use of midwives and community support groups for mothers).

Having competent and capable trainers and educators is critical to the success of any training and education programme. Trainers trained in key food safety messages and how such messages can be used to increase safe food handling and safe food choices are essential to any effective programme for improving safe food handling and increasing the ability of individuals and communities to make safe food choices. Education programmes should also include an evaluation process to measure their effectiveness and improve them as necessary.
5.2 Strategic direction

While recognizing the importance of food safety education and training for all stakeholders, intensify the food safety education and training programme for priority groups, including women of reproductive age, pregnant women, mothers and carers of infants and young children, schoolchildren (pre-school, primary and secondary), and health workers and carers of the elderly, immunocompromised and chronically ill. Require mandatory food safety training for food handlers in those businesses handling high-risk foods. To achieve maximum impact and sustainability, build partnerships and links with existing health education programmes and with those who can facilitate an enabling environment for improved safe food handling. In addition, to improve training and education and maximize its effectiveness, ensure evaluation processes are integral components of programmes.
5.3 Strategic actions

National food control authorities, in partnership with other key stakeholders, will carry out the following strategic actions to enhance food safety training and education at all levels (national, provincial and local):

(1) Review existing programmes to assess their ability to provide adequate and effective food safety education for priority groups and revise and implement more targeted programmes to ensure they reach poor and vulnerable populations. With regard to infant and young children feeding practices, first review common practices nationally then identify priority actions for risk reduction to better direct food safety education, develop guidance on safer practices, and introduce programmes aimed at increasing the safety of such feeding practices.

(2) Review and revise pre-school and school policies, programmes and curricula to increase attention to food safety and improve the capacity of children to make safe food choices and to handle food more safely.

(3) To maximize the impact of food safety training and education, increase the competency and capability of trainers and educators by training them in key food safety messages and how such messages can best be developed and delivered.
(4) Strengthen food safety training for all food handlers in food businesses producing, processing and trading food along the food chain and make mandatory, appropriate-level food safety training programmes targeted at food handlers engaged in food businesses handling high-risk foods.

(5) Build partnerships and links with existing health education programmes and with those who can facilitate an enabling environment for improved safe food handling.

(6) Apply mechanisms, including existing regional and international training initiatives, to build links between government, industry and trainers to bring together resources to enhance and sustain food safety education.

5.4 Indicators

(1) Food safety education and training programmes set up to be targeted and effective and to reach priority groups.

(2) Partnerships identified and applied to enhance food safety education and training outcomes.

(3) Food safety training for food handlers engaged in handling high-risk food required by legislation and an implementation process in place.
6. Capacity to Detect, Assess and Manage Food Safety Incidents and Emergencies

6.1 Background

The protection of public health, through the provision of safe food, is the objective of national food control systems. However, even with the most developed food control system, such systems fail from time to time and unsafe food is sold, leading to foodborne disease. In some cases, emergencies will arise because of the severity of the disease, the extent of the distribution and/or volume of the contaminated food, or the system’s inability to effectively manage the situation. To limit the public health, economic and societal impacts of food safety emergencies, national governments must be able to detect, assess and manage food safety incidents and emergencies. These capacities are also considered core capacities, as defined by the International Health Regulations (2005).

A food safety emergency response plan is an integral part of a national food control system and draws upon many components to be effective. A multidisciplinary approach is essential to all public health emergencies and, as such, the food safety emergency response plan should interface with other emergency response systems.

Risk analysis for urgent food safety events provides a framework to assess the risk of a food safety incident or emergency, to develop risk management options proportionate to risk, and to communicate the likely risk to stakeholders, including consumers and industry affected by the incident or emergency. Applying the principles of risk analysis ensures a consistent, effective approach to the management of food safety emergencies, which will engender consumer and industry confidence in the actions undertaken by the food safety authority. The development of systems that provide risk management options before an emergency occurs, such as traceability and recall, is an integral step in food safety emergency preparedness.
The international distribution of food and global travel are commonplace in today’s society; therefore food safety must be tackled, not only at the national level, but also internationally through the sharing of information among national food control authorities. The International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN), an FAO/WHO initiative, facilitates sharing of such information.

### 6.2 Strategic direction
Contribute to health security by enhancing capacities to detect, assess and manage food safety incidents and emergencies at national and international levels. This will be achieved through sharing relevant expertise, resources and information globally, regionally and subregionally.

### 6.3 Strategic actions
National food control authorities, in partnership with other key stakeholders, will carry out the following strategic actions:

1. Develop and update food safety emergency response plans, linking to other emergency plans where appropriate. Test such plans through national and international food safety emergency simulations.

2. Develop or strengthen event detection systems, risk analysis capacities and food traceability and recall systems for food incidents and emergencies.

3. Actively participate in INFOSAN, through (a) timely communication of information relating to food safety incidents and emergencies of international interest, and (b) establishing agreements between the National IHR Focal Point and the INFOSAN Emergency Contact Point on their roles and responsibilities.
(4) Support the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific in its work to identify likely incidents and emergencies with food safety components in the Region and develop guidelines outlining standard responses for food safety components, for modification and implementation at the national level. Identify incidents and emergencies that may occur at the national level and, utilizing the guidelines, prepare for such events.

6.4 Indicators
(1) Active participation in INFOSAN by all Member States of the WHO Western Pacific Region.

(2) Food safety emergency response plans in place and tested and updated as needed in Member States of the WHO Western Pacific Region.
7. Enhanced Cooperative Planning and Implementation of Regional and Subregional Food Safety Strategies and Action Plans

7.1 Background
There is a need to improve food safety within the Western Pacific Region, to increase protection of consumers’ health and to facilitate food trade through the collaborative efforts of Member States. This will contribute to the integration and coordination of activities to support capacity-building in food safety at the national level, harmonization of legislation among Member States to facilitate trade, and implementation of joint regional activities in food safety to support national efforts in food control.

7.2 Strategic direction
Develop mechanisms for coordination, planning and implementation of regional, subregional and bilateral food safety strategies and action plans to maximize outcomes, minimize duplication and enhance the efficiency of resource management.

7.3 Strategic actions
(1) Establish a food safety cooperation working group among key representatives of the APEC Food Safety Cooperation Forum, ASEAN Expert Group on Food Safety, the Food Secure Pacific Framework for Action Working Group, and international organizations, such as FAO, OIE and WHO, to share information and coordinate regional and subregional plans and strategies, with the aim of building on existing strategies and plans in a coordinated manner.

(2) The working group will initiate a forum (including physical meetings, teleconferencing and electronic dialogues, as appropriate) to facilitate discussion and progress toward coordinated planning.

(3) Through the forum mechanisms, the working group will strive to obtain the commitment of relevant bodies:
(a) to map the current food safety control situation in Member States;
(b) to map existing regional, subregional and national programmes aimed at building food safety capacities at all levels;
(c) to give consideration to conducting regional risk assessment processes, utilizing regional expertise, through expert consultations and other mechanisms, as appropriate;

(d) to move towards an outcome-based coordinated planning process that prevents duplication of effort and ensures the best use of resources; and

(e) to collaborate in engaging donor agencies and development banks so that funding and activities contribute to identified outcomes.

(4) At an agreed time, involve other key stakeholders, including aid agencies and development banks, in working group activities, as and when appropriate.

(5) Contribute to global health security by strengthening food safety capacities through sharing of information and experiences, including information on new technologies and innovative systems developed to assist in food control, and establish effective partnerships between developing and developed countries, as well as among developing countries.

7.4 Indicators

(1) A functioning food safety cooperation working group set up to coordinate food safety activities in the Western Pacific Region.

(2) Effective partnerships established and reinforced in Member States of the WHO Western Pacific Region.
The Regional Committee,

Recalling resolutions WHA53.15, which requested the Director-General to give greater emphasis to food safety; WPR/RC52.R2 on the Western Pacific Regional Strategy for Food Safety; WPR/RC55.R6 on the importance of multisectoral collaboration and sharing food safety information among Member States; and WHA63.3, which confirmed foodborne diseases as a serious threat and included a series of food safety initiatives;

Acknowledging that the increase in international trade in food and in international travel may impact food safety;

Recognizing the importance of new developments that, in part, address food safety issues, including the International Health Regulations (2005) and the Asia Pacific Strategy for Emerging Diseases (2010);

Recognizing the importance and value of a common framework for effective planning and coordination of various capacity-building activities at both national and regional levels;

Having reviewed the draft Western Pacific Regional Food Safety Strategy (2011–2015),

1. ENDORSES the Western Pacific Regional Food Safety Strategy (2011–2015);

2. URGES Member States:

   (1) to use the Western Pacific Regional Food Safety Strategy (2011–2015) as a framework for the strengthening of national food control systems to effectively protect public health, prevent fraud, avoid food adulteration, and facilitate safe and healthy food;

   (2) to strengthen or sustain, as appropriate, human and financial resources to facilitate the implementation of such systems;
(3) to collaborate with other countries and areas to share information and experiences related to the development and implementation of national food control systems;

(4) to participate in the International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) and Codex Alimentarius Commission in an effort to improve regional and global health security;

3. REQUESTS the Regional Director:

(1) to support Member States in capacity-building and in strengthening national food control systems based on the Western Pacific Regional Food Safety Strategy (2011–2015);

(2) to advocate and disseminate the Western Pacific Regional Food Safety Strategy (2011–2015) to partner agencies to mobilize, coordinate and harmonize partner support in strengthening of national food control systems;

(3) to enhance collaboration with partners to establish a food safety cooperation working group, as described in the Western Pacific Regional Food Safety Strategy (2011–2015);

(4) to report to the Regional Committee periodically on the implementation of the Western Pacific Regional Food Safety Strategy (2011–2015).