

**Proposed Discussion Paper on Nutrition Claims and Functional Claims
SANCO/1341/2001**

International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) Europe Comments

1. The title of the proposed discussion paper (SANCO/1341/2001) does not correctly reflect its content. The proposed discussion paper deals mainly with so-called nutrition claims (as defined in CAC/GL23/1997) including nutrient content claims, comparative claims and nutrient function claims. ILSI Europe is concerned that the document creates confusion rather than clarification in the presently ongoing debate concerning claims for foodstuffs by referring to existing claims defined in CODEX ALIMENTARIUS and in the Nutritional Labelling Directive, but at the same time adding new terms (such as “functional claims”) without defining them. A more appropriate title could be “Proposed Discussion Paper on nutritional claims and nutrient function claims”.
2. As part of the European Community (EC) Concerted Action on Functional Food Science in Europe (FUFOSE) (FAIR-CT95-0572), ILSI Europe developed a consensus document regarding the science base for claims on foods. The results of this concerted action are published in the *British Journal of Nutrition* (see references 1, 2). Furthermore, a recently funded EC Concerted Action focuses on defining a process for the assessment of scientific support for claims on foods (PASSCLAIM) (QLRT-2000-00086).
3. ILSI Europe has taken due note that health claims or claims such as enhanced function claims and disease risk reduction claims as proposed in the draft Codex guidelines for health claims (ALINORM 01/22 Appendix VIII) and as dealt with in the FUFOSE consensus document under subsection 5.5 will be subject of a separate consultation by DG SANCO at a later stage. ILSI Europe fails to find any scientific basis to exclude these 2 key categories of claims from this discussion paper on claims for foods. FUFOSE established the scientific approaches necessary to underpin such claims.
4. ILSI Europe agrees that any claim for foodstuffs must be based on generally accepted scientific evidence or on product-specific documentation provided by the company making the claim.

References

- 1) Bellisle F, Diplock AT, Hornstra G, Koletzko B, Roberfroid M, Salminen S and Saris WHM (1998) Functional Food Science in Europe. *British Journal of Nutrition*, Vol 80, Suppl 1, p 1-193.
- 2) Diplock AT, Aggett PJ, Ashwell M, Bornet F, Fern EB, Roberfroid MB (1999) Scientific Concepts of Functional Foods in Europe: Consensus Document. *British Journal of Nutrition*, Vol 81, Suppl 1, p 1-27.