

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
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Agenda Item 10

CX/FFP 08/29/8

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS

Twenty-ninth Session
Trondheim, Norway, 18 - 23 February 2008

PROPOSED DRAFT REVISION OF THE PROCEDURE FOR THE INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL SPECIES IN STANDARDS FOR FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS At Step 3 of the elaboration procedure

(Prepared by an electronic working group led by France)

Governments and international organizations wishing to submit comments on the Proposed draft Revision of the Procedure for the Inclusion of Additional Species in Standards for Fish and Fishery Products are invited to do so **no later than 30 November 2007** to: the Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy (Fax No + 39 06 57054593; E-mail: codex@fao.org), with a copy to Codex Contact Point, Norwegian Food Control Authority, P.O. Box 8187 Dep. 0034 Oslo, Norway, Fax: +47.74.11.32.01, E-mail: ccffp@mattilsynet.no.

BACKGROUND

1. At its 28th Session (Beijing, 18 – 22 September 2006), the Committee agreed that the Discussion Paper on the Procedure for the Inclusion of Additional Species in Standards for Fish and Fishery Products should be accepted as new work (ALINORM 07/30/18 – para. 10). It also agreed to submit the project document (Appendix 2 of CX/FFP 06/28/10) for consideration by the 30th session of the Commission. Pending approval by the Commission, the Delegation of France kindly offered to lead the development of this work, based on Appendix 1 of CX/FFP 06/28/10, with assistance of several other delegations and to prepare the revision to the inclusion procedure for circulation for comments at Step 3 and further discussion by the next session of the Committee. (ALINORM 07/30/18 – para. 123).
2. In the project document, the Committee noted that the revision of the existing Procedure was long overdue, in view of: (1) the General Principles of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, inviting its subsidiary bodies "(...) to revis[e] as necessary Codex standards and related texts to ensure that they are consistent with and reflect current scientific knowledge and other relevant information"¹; (2) the availability of new analytical methods and (3) the amendments of the Elaboration Procedure in 2004².
3. The revision would improve the existing Procedure, by providing a sound framework for decisions based on "state of the art" methods of fish species identification and of sensory evaluation methodology of processed products. This work would also describe the evidentiary dossier to be used to support a request and the decision making-process to be followed by the Codex Alimentarius Commission to amend the

¹ See Procedural Manual – 16th Edition –p. 30: General Principles of the Codex Alimentarius (para. 4).

² See ALINORM 04/27/41 – Appendix 2.

relevant standards. The revision would address: Fish species identification methods; sensory evaluation methods; data availability and validation by recognised scientific bodies; contents of the evidentiary dossier; Codex procedural matters.

4. Standards had been grouped and simplified when revised; the “essential quality factors” section did not include detailed provisions on the species or group of species concerned. This resulted in potential confusion for the consumer, especially as the same species could be covered by different standards, according to their mode of presentation. The Committee noted that current lists were based solely on the mode of preparation and could include species that were not taxonomically related and that this created considerable confusion for consumers as to the nature of the product, as the common names of species were not consistently based on taxonomic criteria. It has identified the need to apply scientific criteria in the process.

5. The 30th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Rome, 2 – 7 July 2007) approved the proposed revision. The Commission also recommended that the Committee consider, upon finalisation of the document, its inclusion in the Procedural Manual and subsequent publication on the Codex website in order to enhance transparency of the processes used by the Committee³.

6. The Delegation of France is grateful to acknowledge the inputs received from Australia, Canada, and Germany, as they all have been of great importance for preparing this proposed draft revision of the current procedure, for circulation for comments at Step 3 and consideration during the next session of the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products.

PROCEDURAL ISSUES:

KEY FEATURES OF THE ELABORATION PROCEDURE APPLIED BY THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

7. The Codex Alimentarius Commission has been established to adopt international standards, in order to “protect the health of the consumers and ensure fair practices in the food trade” (Article 1(a) of its Statutes). In order to fulfil this mandate, a *Procedure for the Elaboration of Codex Standards and Related Texts* and *Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities* have been enforced by the Commission.

8. The General Principles of the Codex Alimentarius state, about the revision of existing texts, that “*the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its subsidiary bodies are committed to revision as necessary of Codex standards and related texts to ensure that they are consistent with and reflect current scientific knowledge and other relevant information. When required, a standard or related text shall be revised or removed using the same procedures as followed for the elaboration of a new standard. Each member of the Codex Alimentarius Commission is responsible for identifying, and presenting to the appropriate committee, any new scientific and other relevant information which may warrant revision of any existing Codex standards or related texts.*” (see para. 4)

9. The decision to undertake new work or to revise standards shall be taken by the Commission taking into account a critical review conducted by the Executive Committee, which includes “*an examination of proposals for development/revision of standards, taking into account the “Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities”, the Strategic Plan of the Commission and the required supporting work of independent risk assessment.*”

10. When a Codex Committee proposes to elaborate a standard, code of practice or related text within its terms of reference, it should first consider the priorities established by the Commission in the Strategic Plan, the relevant outcomes of the critical review conducted by the Executive Committee, and the prospect of completing the work within a reasonable period of time.

11. Prior to approval for development, each proposal for new work or revision of a standard, shall be accompanied by a project document, prepared by the Committee or Member proposing new work or revision of a standard, providing the relevant information.

³ ALINORM 07/30/REP, paras 98-99 and Appendix VII

12. At its last session, the Codex Alimentarius Commission noted that project documents submitted to the Executive Committee contained information that, while respecting the overall format as set out in the Procedural Manual, varied significantly in terms of quantity and quality. Therefore, the Commission encouraged Codex committees, task forces and Codex Members to provide sufficiently detailed, relevant information with particular regard to the evidence-based assessment against each of all the Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities (see ALINORM 07/30/REP, para. 92).

13. The procedure requires that proposals should be assessed against the criteria set out below.

“GENERAL CRITERION

Consumer protection from the point of view of health, food safety, ensuring fair practices in the food trade and taking into account the identified needs of developing countries.

CRITERIA APPLICABLE TO COMMODITIES

(a) Volume of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of trade between countries.

(b) Diversification of national legislations and apparent resultant or potential impediments to international trade.

(c) International or regional market potential.

(d) Amenability of the commodity to standardisation.

(e) Coverage of the main consumer protection and trade issues by existing or proposed general standards.

(f) Number of commodities which would need separate standards indicating whether raw, semi-processed or processed.

(g) Work already undertaken by other international organizations in this field and/or suggested by the relevant international intergovernmental body(ies).”

14. During its last session, the Codex Alimentarius Commission adopted a revision of the *Guide to the Procedure for the Amendment and Revision of Codex Standards and Related Texts*⁴, in order to provide more detailed guidance to Codex subsidiary bodies. The Commission has the final authority to determine whether a proposal constitutes an amendment or a revision, and whether an amendment is of an editorial or substantive nature. “Amendment” and “revision” are defined as follows:

“Amendment means any addition, change or deletion of text or numerical values in a Codex standard or related text, may be editorial or substantive, and concerns one or a limited number of articles in the Codex text. In particular, amendments of an editorial nature may include but are not limited to: correction of an error; insertion of an explanatory footnote; and updating of references consequential to the adoption, amendment or revision of Codex standards and other texts of general applicability, including the provisions in the Procedural Manual.

“Revision means any changes to a Codex standard or related text other than those covered under “amendment” as defined above.”

CURRENT PROCEDURE FOR THE INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL SPECIES

15. The 21st session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (Rome, 3 – 8 July 1995) “invited countries wishing to include additional species to the Definitions for Shrimps and Prawns; Sardines; Tuna and Bonito⁵ to submit relevant data on taxonomy, resources and processing technology to the Committee on Fish and Fishery Products. (...) The Commission agreed that the Accelerated Procedure should be used for the addition of species to the relevant standards. (see ALINORM 95/37 – para. 62)

16. As a follow-up to this decision, the Circular Letter CL 1995/30-FFP (August 1995) was circulated, requesting countries wishing to propose the inclusion of new species to provide the Committee with:

- an attestation from an appropriate recognised institution regarding the scientific name, and other relevant taxonomic information for the species in question;
- data on existing and potential resources;

⁴ See ALINORM 07/30/REP, Appendix III (Report of the 30th session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission).

⁵ Currently, lists of species are found in Codex Standards on canned sardines and sardine-type products, canned tuna and bonito, quick frozen shrimps or prawns, salted herrings and sprats.

- data on derived products;
- the form in which the product will be marketed and the proposed processing technology for each form of presentation, including samples; and
- reports from at least three laboratories from those to be nominated by the Committee, stating that the organoleptic properties of the new species after processing conform to those of the processed species currently included in the pertinent standard.

RECOMMENDATIONS

17. Taking into account the existing provisions for the elaboration and the revision of Codex standards, the Committee may wish to endorse the following statements:

- (a). The inclusion of a fish species should be viewed as a “substantive amendment” of an existing standard and such change requires the submission of a project document by the Member(s) requesting the addition, in order to request the permission to undertake new work from the Codex Alimentarius Commission.
- (b). The types of information required by the 21st Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (on taxonomy, resources and processing technology) are still relevant. However, in view of the growing expectations on the content of the project document expressed by the Executive Committee and by the Commission, it is appropriate to establish an evidentiary dossier to accompany the project document, in order to be more specific on the nature of the required information, to enable the Critical Review and to assist further discussion within this Committee.
- (c). There should be a direct link between the items in the evidentiary dossier and the criteria listed in the Procedural Manual (see § 13 above). The following items are specifically relevant : the “*promotion of fair practices in the food trade*” and “*the identified needs of developing countries*”, as mentioned in the General Criterion, and four Specific Criteria: criterion (a) (“*Volume of production and consumption in individual countries and volume and pattern of trade between countries*”), (b) (“*Diversification of national legislations and apparent resultant or potential impediments to international trade*”), (c) (“*International or regional market potential*”) and (d) (“*Amenability of the commodity to standardisation*”).
- (d). In order to avoid any confusion as to the applicability of the requirements laid out in the dossier, the dossier should be inserted in the Procedural Manual, as the last session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission has suggested: The rationale is that texts relevant only for the Commission and its subsidiary bodies are published there and that texts relevant both for Codex and governments, or governments only, are published as parts of the Codex Alimentarius.

18. The rationale for each section of the draft evidentiary dossier (in Appendix 2) has been highlighted, using the relevant criteria among those listed in the section of the Procedural Manual on Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities (p 66 – 16th edition in English). Furthermore, a detailed rationale for each individual data item has been provided in the discussion paper CX/FFP 06/28/10 (para. 10-28)⁶ and is not repeated in this paper. However, some additional information on available methods of sensory evaluation is presented in Appendix 1.

19. The Committee may wish to consider the content of the draft evidentiary dossier in Appendix 2, with the view of submitting it to the next session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, for preliminary adoption at Step 5.

⁶ ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/ccffp28/fp28_10e.pdf

APPENDIX I**Additional information on available methods for the sensory evaluation****SENSORY ANALYSIS -- METHODOLOGY -- GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR ESTABLISHING A SENSORY PROFILE (ISO 13299:2003)**

This document describes the overall process for developing a sensory profile. Sensory profiles can be established for products such as foods and beverages, and can also be useful in studies of human cognition and behaviour. Some applications of sensory profiling are:

- to develop or change a product;
- to define a product, production standard or trading standard in terms of its sensory attributes;
- to study and improve shelf-life;
- to define a reference fresh product for shelf-life testing;
- to compare a product with a standard or with other similar products on the market or under development;
- to map a product's perceived attributes for the purpose of relating them to factors such as instrumental, chemical or physical properties, and/or to consumer acceptability;
- to characterize by type and intensity the off-odours or off-tastes in a sample of air or water (e.g. in pollution studies).

SENSORY ANALYSIS – METHODOLOGY – TRIANGLE TEST (ISO 4120:2004):

ISO 4120:2004 describes a procedure for determining whether a perceptible sensory difference or similarity exists between samples of two products. The method is a forced-choice procedure. The method applies whether a difference can exist in a single sensory attribute or in several attributes.

The method is statistically more efficient than the duo-trio test, but has limited use with products that exhibit strong carryover and/or lingering flavours.

The method is applicable even when the nature of the difference is unknown (i.e. it determines neither the size nor the direction of difference between samples, nor is there any indication of the attributes responsible for the difference). The method is applicable only if the products are fairly homogeneous.

The method is effective for a) determining that either a perceptible difference results (triangle testing for difference), or a perceptible difference does not result (triangle testing for similarity) when, for example, a change is made in ingredients, processing, packaging, handling or storage; b) or for selecting, training and monitoring assessors.

SENSORY ANALYSIS – METHODOLOGY – “A” - “NOT A” TEST (ISO 8588:1987):

The principle of the test consists in presentation to an assessor of a series of samples, some of which are composed of sample “A” while others are different from sample “A”; for each sample, the assessor has to determine whether or not it is identical to “A”. This test requires the assessor to have evaluated a known sample “A” prior to the exposure to test samples.

SENSORY ANALYSIS - METHODOLOGY - CONVENTIONAL PROFILING (ISO 11035:1994)

This is a method for identifying and selecting descriptors which can then be used for drawing up the sensory profile of a product. Describes the different stages in the process for setting up test through which a complete description of the sensory attributes of a product can be obtained: from a qualitative point of view by defining by means of descriptors all the perceptions for distinguishing one product from others of the same type; from a quantitative point of view, by evaluating the intensity of each descriptor. This method can be used to define a production standard; to improve or develop products; to study the influence of the ageing of products and also of the conditions of storage and preservation; to compare a product with those of the same type already on the market.

NAPPING® POSITIONING

Based on the papers:

- “Collection and analysis of perceived product inter-distances using multiple factor analysis: Application to the study of 10 wines from Loire Valley” – Jérôme Pagès, *Food Quality and Preference*, 16 (2005) 642-649

- “Some new and easy ways to describe, compare, and evaluate products and assessors” – Hervé Abdi et al., in “*New trends in sensory evaluation of food and non-food products (2007)*”

An assessor is asked to position the products on a two-dimensional space (an large sheet of white paper which plays the role of a tablecloth), according to how he or she perceives them to be related to each other. Two products are placed very close to each other if they are perceived as identical and very far one from the other if they are perceived as very different. There are no instructions as to how the samples should be separated in this space (each assessor chooses his/her own criteria), but examples of two-dimensional geographical maps can be used for illustration. After they have positioned the products on the map, assessors can be asked to describe each product by writing a few words directly on the sheet bear the products.

APPENDIX II

PROPOSED DRAFT PROCEDURE FOR THE INCLUSION OF ADDITIONAL SPECIES IN STANDARDS FOR FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS**(To be inserted in the Codex Procedural Manual)**

The Codex Member proposing the inclusion of an additional species in an existing Codex standard shall provide the information listed hereafter, at the same time as the project document required by the Part 2-1 of the Elaboration procedure. This requirement only applies to all standards, within the remit of the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products, for which a list of species has been established.

The information should enable the Commission to decide whether the request is consistent with the Codex Criteria for the Establishment of work priorities, and specifically: Is there a significant trade of the candidate species (and/or its processed products)? Is the species described precisely enough to assess its taxonomic relationship with the species already listed in the relevant Codex standard and to reliably identify its derived processed products? Are the sensory characteristics of these products undistinguishable from those of the species already covered by the standard?

Evidentiary Dossier**1 - CANDIDATE SPECIES DESCRIPTION: BIOLOGICAL AND GENETIC DATA**

(To be used for assessing the proposal against General criterion and specific criterion (d)).

To be valid, information provided in the evidentiary dossier should have been considered by an internationally recognized scientific institution.

Species description includes:

- (a). scientific valid name from internationally recognized reference sources;
- (b). morphological and anatomical characteristics (eventually with a draft or a picture);
- (c). taxonomical position of the candidate species in relation to the taxon(s) listed in the Codex standard or to all the species listed in the standard, presented as a diagram or a list; the reference to the database for taxonomic classification used (for example FAO database or bibliographic references);
- (d). molecular data, achieved with recognized and appropriate methods (electrophoretic protein profile and/or specific DNA sequence).

2 - INFORMATION ON EXISTING AND POTENTIAL RESOURCES

(To be used for assessing the proposal against Specific criteria (a), (b) & (c)).

- (a). Fishing grounds: localization of the main ground on the FAO map “Major fishing area for statistical proposal”;
- (b). Yearly catches during the last 5 [10] years;
- (c). Status of the candidate species with respect to the CITES (Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species);
- (d). Marketing data on the candidate species aquaculture production: production yearly marketed for human consumption during the last 5 [10] years.

3 - PROCESSING AND MARKETING

(To be used for assessing the proposal against Specific criteria (a), (b) & (c)).

- (a). Data on world imports and exports of the raw species and derived processed products: yearly amount and value (during the last 5 years);
- (b). Data on candidate species processing (reporting separately products intended for animal feed): different types of marketed products, processes, yearly amount (during the last 5 years); percentage of these products susceptible to conform with the relevant Codex standard;

- (c). Trade denominations in use for exports of each type of products conforming to the relevant Codex standard.

4. SENSORY EVALUATION

(To be used for assessing the proposal against General Criterion).

Selection of 3 laboratories

The laboratories, carrying out the sensory analysis, should be selected by the Codex member, requesting the inclusion with regard to the consumers' markets for the processed products. Among the three laboratories, one laboratory in a country importing the products from the country, which has requested the inclusion, and one laboratory in a country where a similar product is processed (same processing technique and recipe) using one representative species currently listed in the standard should be selected.

One laboratory shall act as co-ordinator of the test and report on the test results.

Scope of the comparison

- (a). A comparison might be limited to processed products from the candidate species and from, at most, 3 species on the list appended to the current Codex standard, provided that these species are the most prevalent in the processed products consumed in the importing country(ies).
- (b). All the samples should have been processed following the relevant specifications. The type of products should be selected among the most widely traded and as the less likely to confound the recognition of species difference by sensory evaluation.

Implementation of the tests

The tests should conform to the *Codex Guidelines for the Sensory Evaluation of Fish and Shellfish in Laboratories* – CAC - GL 31-1999⁷.

Methods to be used

The method(s) should be in conformity with the *General Criteria for the Selection of Methods of Analysis* or, where relevant, *General Criteria for the Selection of Single-Laboratory Validated Methods of Analysis*, laid out in the *Codex Principles for the Establishment of Codex Methods of Analysis*⁸.

⁷ http://www.codexalimentarius.net/download/standards/359/CXG_031e.pdf

⁸ See Codex Procedural Manual – p. 73 (16th Edition – in English)