

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of
the United Nations



World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 2b

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

**Thirty-first Session
Tromsø, Norway
11 – 15 April 2011**

MATTERS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS (Submitted by OIE)

The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) thanks the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) and the Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP) for the opportunity to contribute to its standards development process.

The OIE and the CAC are two of the three international standard setting organizations recognized under the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (the 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. For food products of animal origin, hazards to human health may arise at the farm or at any subsequent stage in the food production continuum. Since 2001, at the request of its Members, the OIE mandate has included setting standards for animal production food safety, i.e. the management of risks arising at any stage from the farm to primary processing.

In 2002, the OIE established the permanent Animal Production Food Safety Working Group with the goal of improving the coordination and harmonisation of standard setting activities of OIE and CAC. The Secretary of Codex and, on an observer basis, the Chair of Codex, are invited to attend the Working Group's annual meeting and participate in its discussions. Through this mechanism and through participation in each other's standard setting procedures, the OIE and CAC collaborate closely in the development of standards relevant to the whole food production continuum, taking care to avoid gaps, duplications and contradictions in the SPS standards.

The OIE Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission is responsible for setting standards for aquatic animals, including animal production food safety issues, which are contained in the *Aquatic Animal Health Standards Code* (the *Aquatic Code*).

Under the OIE 5th Strategic Plan (2011-2016) food safety-related issues continue to be among the OIE's top priorities. The OIE will continue to work closely with CAC and its Committees, and with other international bodies, in promoting safe international trade in animal products.

1. Amendment of Section 6 of the Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products (CAC/RCP 52-2003)

Noting that the reference to the OIE *Aquatic Code* in section 6 of the Codex Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products (Preamble, paragraph 2) needs to be updated, the OIE proposes the following text:

'Fish farms should operate effective fish health management practices, to maintain fish free of disease to the extent possible. Fish should be routinely monitored for disease using, where applicable, the methods described in the *OIE Manual of Diagnostic Tests for Aquatic Animals*. The Aquatic Animal Health Services in fish farming countries should comply with OIE standards in the *OIE Aquatic Animal Health Code*, ensuring that the principles for the responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents are applied in all fish farms. When using drugs or chemicals on fish farms, care should be taken to ensure

that these substances are not released into the local aquatic environment and to avoid the presence of chemical residues or metabolites in fish for human consumption.’

2. Commodity-based trade – listing of products considered as safe for international trade

In 2010/2011, the OIE *ad hoc* Group on Safety of Products Derived from Aquatic Animals continued its work to develop a list of products considered to be safe for international trade. This assessment is based on defined criteria described in chapter 5.3. of the *Aquatic Code*. The criteria in Article 5.3.1. are based either on the absence of the aquatic animal disease agent in the traded commodity or on the inactivation of the agent by processing the product. The criteria in Article 5.3.2. are based on an assessment of the likely volume of waste and the expected presence of the specified pathogen in waste tissues. An expanded list of aquatic animal products considered safe in relation to each disease chapter is proposed for adoption at the 79th OIE General Session in May 2011. Note: provisions for aquatic animal products considered safe in relation to three diseases (epizootic haematopoietic necrosis, Taura syndrome and infection with *B. ostreae*) were adopted at the 78th OIE General Session in May 2010).

To illustrate the approach adopted by the OIE, Annex 1 shows Articles 3. and 12. in Chapter 10.1. (Epizootic haematopoietic necrosis).

Details of this work can be consulted in Annex 15 of the February 2011 report of the Aquatic Animals Commission (see: <http://www.oie.int/en/international-standard-setting/specialists-commissions-groups/aquatic-animal-commission-reports/meeting-reports/>)

3. Antimicrobial resistance

A new *Aquatic Code* chapter ‘Introduction to the recommendations for controlling antimicrobial resistance’ (Chapter 6.2.) was adopted at the 78th OIE General Session in May 2010. This text aligns with similar text in the *Terrestrial Code*. A chapter on ‘Principles for responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in aquatic animals’ (Chapter 6.3.) is proposed for adoption at the OIE 79th General Session in May 2011.

The draft text may be consulted at Annex 6 in the February 2011 report of the Aquatic Animals Commission (see: <http://www.oie.int/en/international-standard-setting/specialists-commissions-groups/aquatic-animal-commission-reports/meeting-reports/>)

CHAPTER 10.1.

EPIZOOTIC HAEMATOPOIETIC NECROSIS

[...]

Article 10.1.3.

Importation or transit of aquatic animals and aquatic animal products for any purpose from an exporting country, zone or compartment not declared free from epizootic haematopoietic necrosis

1. *Competent Authorities* should not require any EHN related conditions, regardless of the EHN status of the *exporting country, zone or compartment* when authorising the importation or transit of the following *aquatic animals* and *aquatic animal products* from the species referred to in Article 10.1.2. intended for any purpose and complying with Article 5.3.1.:
 - i) heat sterilised hermetically sealed fish products (i.e. a heat treatment at 121°C for at least 3.6 minutes or equivalent);
 - ii) pasteurised fish products that have been subjected to heat treatment at 90°C for 10 minutes or to any pasteurisation equivalent which has been demonstrated to inactivate EHNV;
 - iii) mechanically dried eviscerated fish (i.e. a heat treatment at 100°C for at least 30 minutes or equivalent);
 - iv) fish skin leather;
 - v) fish oil; and
 - vi) fish meal.
2. When authorising the importation or transit of *aquatic animals* and *aquatic animal products* of a species referred to in Article 10.1.2., other than those referred to in point 1 of Article 10.1.3., *Competent Authorities* should require the conditions prescribed in Articles 10.1.7. to 10.1.12. relevant to the EHN status of the *exporting country, zone or compartment*.
3. When considering the importation or transit of *aquatic animals* and *aquatic animal products* from an *exporting country, zone or compartment* not declared free of EHN from a species not covered in Article 10.1.2. but which could reasonably be expected to pose a *risk* of transmission for EHN, *Competent Authorities* should conduct a *risk analysis* in accordance with the recommendations in the *Aquatic Code*. The *exporting country* should be informed of the outcome of this assessment.

[...]

Annex 1

Article 10.1.12.

Importation of aquatic animals and aquatic animal products for retail trade for human consumption from a country, zone or compartment not declared free from epizootic haematopoietic necrosis

1. *Competent Authorities* should not require any EHV related conditions, regardless of the EHV status of the *exporting country, zone or compartment* when authorising the importation or transit of the following *commodities* which have been prepared and packaged for retail trade and complying with Article 5.3.2.:
 - i) fillets or steaks (chilled or frozen).

For these *commodities* Members may wish to consider introducing internal measures to address the *risks* associated with the *commodity* being used for any purpose other than for human consumption.

2. When importing *aquatic animals* and *aquatic animal products*, other than those referred to in point 1 above, of the species referred to in Article 10.1.2. from a country, *zone* or *compartment* not declared free from EHV, the *Competent Authority* of the *importing country* should assess the *risk* and apply appropriate *risk mitigation measures*.
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