CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION **E**

Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

World Health
Organization

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Agenda Item 2   **CX/FICS 17/23/2**
April 2017

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

**CODEX COMMITTEE ON FOOD IMPORT AND EXPORT INSPECTION
AND CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS**

Twenty-third Session

**MATTERS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY THE CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION
AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES**

A.   Matters Arising from the 39th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC39)[1]

1.   CAC39:

   -     Adopted the proposed draft Guidance for Monitoring the Performance of National Food Control Systems, at Step 5; and

   -     Noted that the text would be useful for monitoring the performance of national food control systems and suggested that further consideration should be given to developing guidance on establishing indicators and methods to measure them.

2.   The Committee is invited to consider this matter under Agenda Item 4.

B.   Matters Arising from other Codex Subsidiary Bodies

25th Session of the Codex Committee on Fats and Oils (CCFO25)[2]

3.   When considering the draft standard for fish oils, CCFO25 discussed the difficulties associated with using only the fatty acid ranges as measure to determine authenticity of different fish oils. The Committee agreed to inform CCFICS of their concern and that consideration be given to this, in their work on food authenticity/integrity (Copy of the discussion is presented in the Annex to this document).

4.   The Committee is invited to take into account the concern of CCFO under Agenda Item 5.

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[1] REP16/CAC, paras 92-93
[2] REP17/FO, paras 17-28

ANNEX

DRAFT STANDARD FOR FISH OILS (Agenda Item 4)

16.   Switzerland, Chair of the Physical Working Group (PWG), introduced the report on the draft standard for fish oils (CRD2), which had met immediately prior to the current session. She recalled, that the standard only applies to all types of fish oils that are used as ingredients in food or in food supplements, but it does not apply to foods or food supplements themselves, in which these fish oils are used. She further noted the key points discussed and agreements reached by the PWG. She highlighted that:

- the fatty acid ranges for anchovy oil, krill oil and wild salmon oil in Table 1 had been adjusted based on additional information on fatty acid composition of these oils;
- the inclusion of any new named fish oil from farmed fish species should be handled in the same way as oil from farmed salmon, by introducing a separate entry in Table 1 for such oils; and the labelling should specify the source of the raw material (wild or farmed);
- the USP-NF monograph specified for astaxanthin, a minimum content of 0.01%. As limited data on the astaxanthin content of krill oil was available, it was decided that further data should be collected in order to discuss a future inclusion of a minimal astaxanthin content in krill oil as a quality criteria;
- consideration was given to the reply to the question from CCMAS on the method for determination of phospholipids, and identification of methods for triglycerides.

17.   The PWG discussed the difficulties using only the fatty acid ranges of Table 1 as measure to determine compliance of a fish oil with Section 2.1 of the standard. Specifically, the positive verification of the fish species used as raw material may not always be unequivocal. It was agreed that current practice to refer to supplementary information from traceability and certification systems could assist stakeholders (industry, control authorities). Further consideration should be given to work on this matter in close coordination with the ongoing work on food authenticity/integrity in CCFICS.

Discussion

18.   The Committee considered the revised standard section by section, agreed with the proposals made by the PWG, and in addition considered the following aspects:

Authenticity of fish oils

19.   Recalling the discussion in the PWG as presented above (para. 17) and recognizing that the *Format for Codex Commodity Standards* in the Procedural Manual did not allow for issues related to traceability and certification to be addressed in a commodity standard, some delegations expressed support for a discussion paper that outlines the problem and identifies those elements from traceability and certification systems that would encourage good practice and assist in applying the Standard.

20.   Other delegations were of the view that such a discussion paper was premature, noting that CCFICS23 would start the discussion regarding food authenticity and food integrity. These delegations further noted the concerns regarding fatty acid profiles and use of other criteria to ensure authenticity were not limited to fish oils; and that the issue of traceability should be addressed in a broader manner. CCFICS23 should be informed on the concerns of CCFO to contribute to the discussion on food authenticity and food integrity.

21.   It was agreed that the development of a discussion paper was premature. However, a CL should be sent out after the adoption of the standard encouraging members to monitor the application of the standard with respect to the conformity of named fish oils with the requirements (especially the fatty acid profile), its effect on trade and to bring this information to CCFO26. Based on that data the Committee will evaluate whether a revision of the fatty acid profiles for named fish oils is necessary and whether other aspects such as additional complementary criteria are needed. The Delegations of Chile and Switzerland offered to coordinate this work and present the information for consideration by CCFO26.

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Conclusion

28.   The Committee agreed to:

- i.   Forward the draft standard for Fish Oils (Appendix III) to CAC40 for adoption at Step 8;
- iv.   Inform CCFICS of concerns of the CCFO with regard to authenticity of different oils and that consideration be given to this in their work on food authenticity/integrity;
- vi.   Request the Codex Secretariat to issue a CL to request information to monitor the application of the standard with respect to the conformity of named fish oils with the requirements (especially the fatty acid profile) and its effect on trade; and
- vii.   Request Chile and Switzerland to compile the information submitted in (vi) above and report to CCFO26.