

May 2010

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منظمة الأغذية
والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food
and
Agriculture
Organization
of
the
United
Nations

Organisation
des
Nations
Unies
pour
l'alimentation
et
l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная
организация
Объединенных
Наций

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

COMMITTEE ON COMMODITY PROBLEMS

INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP ON TEA

NINETEENTH SESSION

New Delhi, 12 – 14 May 2010

**REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON TEA TRADE AND
QUALITY**

In my capacity as the Chairman of the Working Group on Tea Trade & Quality, I am now in a position to update the report as below for the individual countries from where I have obtained information pertaining to implementation of ISO 3720 on Minimum Quality Standard for black tea exports.

The support received from co-chairs, Kenya, China, India & Indonesia in this regard is appreciated.

The information received from the various producing countries is summarized below:

Tanzania

Already adopted ISO 3720 by developing their own standard TZS 352:1989 by Tanzanian Bureau of Standards.

Rwanda

In compliance with the annex III the WTO/TBT by Rwanda Bureau of standards, they have adopted their own standard for tea 37:2005.

Uganda

Uganda has agreed to provide a position report on implementation of ISO 3720 at the forthcoming FAO/IGG Session in India.

Malawi

Would be fully ISO 3720 compliant by mid 2010.

Burundi & Ethiopia

So far has not responded. Kenya has agreed to follow up this matter.

Vietnam

A request was forwarded to Vietnam Tea Association but we have not received a response yet. Since our attempt to get China to assist us to obtain information from Vietnam has failed, a request was made to the FAO/IGG Secretariat to directly obtain this information as suggested by China.

However, we are made to understand from the correspondence received from ITC London that Vietnam claims that all their teas are above ISO 3720.

Issues of other countries who are not in a position to implement ISO 3720.

Few African tea producers expressed their difficulty to implement ISO 3720 when the issue was proposed at a previous FAO/IGG meeting due to a majority of their end product being below the minimum standard. Thus, it is reasonable to work closely with those producer countries and formulate a scheme to upgrade their quality standards. Until such time a period of transition may have to be agreed upon for those countries so that they come up to acceptable or equivalent standards.

In case of Sri Lanka, the ISO Standard for Black Tea was first introduced in 1968 by Bureau of Ceylon Standard under Ceylon Standard 28:1968 and it was revised in 1979 under Sri Lanka

Standard 135:1979. Sri Lanka Tea Board as the monitoring authority of quality/standard of tea exported is mandated to protect the image of Ceylon Tea established globally. Presently ISO 3720 Standard is mandatory at the points pre-auction, pre-shipment and importation of other origins teas for blending and re-export purposes. Non-conformity of this standard will be treated as grounds for rejection for disposal through approved channels/export/import/re-export.

Also it may be highlighted that the Colombo Tea Auction prices frequently remained way above the prices of the other world auction centers. Strict implementation of ISO 3720 minimum standard, among other things, we believe is one important reason for the premium price we receive.

Recommendations

1. Obtain information from tea producing countries in respect to the points at which implementation of ISO 3720/local equivalent is monitored.
2. The levels and percentages of the characteristics and the methods of testing adopted to monitor such levels & percentages.
3. Any technical or other difficulties experienced in the adoption/implementation of ISO 3720 /local equivalent standards.
4. Any assistance required for efficient and effective adoption/implementation of ISO 3720 minimum standard.

Lalith Hettiarachchi
Chairman
Sri Lanka Tea Board
30.04.2010