

# CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization

# E

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy - Tel: (+39) 06 57051 - E-mail: [codex@fao.org](mailto:codex@fao.org) - [www.codexalimentarius.org](http://www.codexalimentarius.org)

CL 2020/61/OCS REV-FFP  
January 2021

**TO:** Codex Contact Points  
Contact Points of international organizations having observer status with Codex

**FROM:** Secretariat, Codex Alimentarius Commission  
Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme

**SUBJECT:** **Request for comments on the establishment of an Electronic Working Group (EWG) to evaluate a proposed amendment of the *Standard for Canned Sardines and Sardine-Type Products (CXS 94-1981)***

**DEADLINE:** 31 January 2021

## Background

A project document for a proposed amendment of the *Standard for Canned Sardines and Sardine-Type Products (CXS 94-1981)* to include the fish species *Sardinella lemuru* (Bali Sardinella) under Section 2.1 was submitted by the Philippines to the Codex Secretariat in accordance with the Procedural Manual, *Criteria for the Establishment of Work Priorities* and the *Guide to the Procedure for the Amendment and Revision of Codex Standards and Related Texts*.

The Codex Secretariat and Norway, as the host of the at that time adjourned *sine die* Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP), discussed the proposal taking into consideration the *Procedure for the inclusion of additional species in the Codex standards for fish and fishery products*, and the project document was considered complete. Therefore, a Circular letter (CL 2020/28/OCS-CAC Rev.1) was submitted in March 2020 together with the project document to request comments on whether Codex should pursue this new work on amending the *Standard for Canned Sardines and Sardine-Type Products (CXS 94-1981)* with a view to include *S. lemuru*; and whether the new work, if approved by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC), could be undertaken electronically.

The responses received<sup>1</sup> indicated support for new work by correspondence and a need for further discussion on technical issues and further sensory evaluation in accordance with the *Procedure for the Inclusion of Additional Species in Codex Standards for Fish and Fishery Products*.

As this work falls under the mandate of CCFFP, which was adjourned *sine die* at the time the proposal was received, CAC43 approved the proposal that CCFFP be reactivated to work by correspondence in accordance with the *Procedure for the Inclusion of Additional Species in Codex Standards for Fish and Fishery Products*, to evaluate if the *Standard for Canned Sardines and Sardine-Type Products (CXS 94-1981)* could be amended to include the fish species *S. lemuru* (Bali Sardinella) in the list of *Sardinella* species under section 2.1.

With reference to comments received in response to CL 2020/28/OCS-CAC Rev.1 and at CAC43 regarding sustainable fishery, please note that technical issues will be addressed in the foreseen CCFFP discussion. Regarding sustainable fishery, please note the CCFFP32 had agreed that the wordings of paragraph 3.2.1.(c) of the *Procedure for the Inclusion of Additional Species in Codex Standards for Fish and Fishery Products*, "Estimate of volume of stocks present in the natural environment if available" be retained noting that "if available" allowed for sufficient flexibility<sup>2</sup>.

## Request for comments

The work is proposed to commence following the *Procedure on Inclusion of Additional Species in Codex Standards for Fish and Fishery Products*, as outlined below.

Members are requested to comment on the following:

1. As responses to CL 2020/28 demonstrated, a sensory evaluation is required. In accordance with the *Procedure for the Inclusion of Additional Species in Codex Standards for Fish and Fishery Products*, it is the responsibility of the proposing member (the Philippines) to propose three species, the most representatives of the market, to be compared with the candidate species and propose three

<sup>1</sup> CX/CAC 20/43/9 Add.2

<sup>2</sup> REP 13/FFP para 123

laboratories for sensory evaluation. To assist the Philippines, Members will be invited to provide information on both candidate species and laboratories.

In accordance with the *Procedure for the Inclusion of Additional Species in Codex Standards for Fish and Fishery Products*, an Electronic Working Group (EWG) may be established to review the documentation provided by the proposing member, oversee the sensory evaluation, examine the laboratory report on the sensory evaluation, and inform the Committee if the candidate species satisfy the requirements for inclusion in the relevant standard.

The Chairperson of CCFFP suggested during CAC43 that to efficiently progress the work and to facilitate discussion of technical issues an EWG led by the Philippines should be established.<sup>3</sup> The Philippines has expressed their willingness to chair the EWG.

**Members are kindly invited to comment on whether they are in agreement with that the Philippines chair the EWG, working in English only, and if not, provide the rationale and alternative proposals.**

**Any Member willing to co-chair the EWG is kindly requested to respond to this CL.**

2. The proposed Terms of Reference of the EWG is to “evaluate if the *Standard for Canned Sardines and Sardine-Type Products* (CXS 94-1981) can be amended with a view to include the fish species *Sardinella lemuru* (Bali Sardinella) in the list of *Sardinella* species under section 2.1.” by following the *Procedure for the Inclusion of Additional Species in Codex Standards for Fish and Fishery Products* and:
  - a. Decide upon three species, the most representatives of the market, to be compared with the candidate species and propose three laboratories for sensory evaluation.
  - b. Oversee the sensory evaluation of the product in accordance with the *Procedure for the Inclusion of Additional Species in Codex Standards for Fish and Fishery Products* in the Procedural Manual, in particular paragraphs 2.2(b), 2.3, 3.3 and 4.
  - c. The EWG will work using the Codex e-Forum, and prepare a report on its findings, conclusions and recommendations to the CCFFP by 1 September 2021.

When the recommendation from the EWG is received, the reactivated CCFFP will thereafter convene a session working by correspondence to discuss the recommendation and consider the possibility of proposing an amendment to CXS 94-1981 for possible approval by CAC45 in 2022. Any further technical issues will also be addressed.

**Members are kindly invited to comment on whether they are in agreement with the proposed Terms of Reference above, and if not, provide the rationale and alternative proposals.**

### Guidance on the provision of comments

Codex members and observers are invited to submit comments on the questions above, which are uploaded on the Codex Online Commenting System (OCS): <https://ocs.codexalimentarius.org/>

Comments should be submitted through the Codex Contact Points of Codex Members and observers using the OCS.

Contact Points of Codex Members and observers may login to the OCS and access the document open for comments by selecting “Enter” in the “My reviews” page, available after login to the system.

Other OCS resources, including the user manual and short guide, can be found at the following link: <http://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/resources/circular-letters/en/>.

For questions on the OCS, please contact [Codex-OCS@fao.org](mailto:Codex-OCS@fao.org)

---

<sup>3</sup> REP20/CAC, para 138; CX/CAC 20/43/9 Add.1