

# codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Agenda Item 8**

**CX/FFP 02/8**

## **JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME**

### **CODEX COMMITTEE ON FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS**

Twenty-fifth Session  
Ålesund, Norway, 3 - 7 June 2002

#### **PROPOSED DRAFT MODEL CERTIFICATE FOR FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS**

(Prepared by Norway and Canada)

The 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Fish and Fishery Products considered a document prepared by the Delegations of Norway and Canada on model certificates and had a general discussion on the elements that should be included in certificates for fish and fishery products and related issues. The Committee noted that the document had not been circulated prior to the session, and it was circulated at Step 3 with the report of the session (ALINORM 01/18, Appendix VIII, CL 2000/20-FFP). Governments were invited to provide comments especially on the Attestation Section and the certification requirements, to allow the delegations of Norway and Canada, with the assistance of interested countries, to revise the text for consideration by the next session if necessary (ALINORM 01/18, paras. 136-140).

The comments from Spain received in reply to CL 2000/20-FFP are presented in [Annex V](#).

The revised version of the Proposed Draft Model Certificate for Fish and Fishery Products prepared by Norway and Canada is attached for consideration by the Committee. Comments at Step 3 are not requested at this stage in view of time constraints.

# PROPOSED DRAFT MODEL CERTIFICATES FOR FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS

(At Step 3 of the Procedure)

## INTRODUCTION

Certification is one method that can be utilized by regulatory agencies of importing and exporting countries to compliment the control of their inspection system for fish and fishery products. To help facilitate international trade, the numbers and types of certificates should be limited and could be promoted through international (Codex) model certificates. Notwithstanding, alternatives to the use of official and officially recognized certificates<sup>1</sup> should be considered wherever possible, in particular where the inspection system and requirements of an exporting country are assessed as being equivalent to those of the importing country. The establishment of bilateral or multilateral agreements, such as mutual recognition agreements may provide the logical basis for discontinuing with the issuance of certificates.

## SCOPE

The model certificates apply to fish and fishery products presented for international trade that meet food safety, wholesomeness and conformity to food production requirements of the importing country. Animal and plant health matters are not covered. Where administratively and economically feasible, certificates may be issued in an electronic format provided that the relevant authorities of both the importing and exporting country are satisfied with the security of the certification system.

Certificates should adequately describe one or several lots or batches of product's compliance with regulatory requirements based on regular inspections by the inspection service. Additional examinations, analytical results, evaluation of quality assurance procedures or product specifications may also be attested to.

## DEFINITIONS<sup>2 3</sup>

**Certification** is the procedure by which official certification bodies or officially recognized certification bodies provide written or equivalent assurance that fish and fishery products or their control systems conform to requirements. Certification of fish and fishery products may be, as appropriate, based on a range of inspection activities which may include continuous on-line inspection, auditing of quality assurance systems, and examination of finished products.

**Inspection** is the examination of fish and fishery products or systems for control of fish and fishery products, raw materials, processing, and distribution including in-process and finished product testing, in order to verify that they conform to requirements.

**Inspection system** means official and officially recognized inspection systems.

**Official inspection systems and official certification systems** are systems administered by a government agency having jurisdiction empowered to perform a regulatory or enforcement function or both.

**Officially recognized inspection systems and officially recognized certification systems** are systems which have been formally approved or recognized by an government agency having jurisdiction.

**Official Certificates**<sup>4</sup> are certificates issued by an official certification body of an exporting country, in accordance with the requirements of the importing or exporting country.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this document, "certificates" shall mean "official certificates" and "officially recognized certificates"

<sup>2</sup> Principles for Food Import and Export Inspection And Certification (CAC/GL 20-1995)

<sup>3</sup> Guidelines for the Development of Equivalence Agreements Regarding Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CAC/GL 34-1999)

**Officially Recognized Certificates**<sup>4</sup> are certificates issued by an officially recognized certification body of an exporting country, in accordance with the conditions of that recognition and in accordance with the requirements of the importing or exporting country.

**Requirements** are the criteria set down by the competent authorities relating to trade in fish and fishery products covering the protection of public health, the protection of consumers and conditions of fair trading.

## **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING THE PRODUCTION AND ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATES**

**4.1** It is recommended that the production and issuance of the certificates for fish and fishery products should be carried out in accordance with the principles and appropriate sections of the:

Draft Guidelines for Generic Official Certificate Formats and the Production and Issuance of Certificates (Alinorm 01/30A, Appendix II);

Principles for Food Import and Export Inspection And Certification (CAC/GL 20-1995);

Guidelines for the Design, Operation, Assessment and Accreditation of Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CAC/GL 26-1997);

Guidelines for the Development of Equivalence Agreements Regarding Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CAC/GL 34-1999);

Proposed Draft Revised Code of Ethics for International Trade in Foods (under revision by the CCGP).

**4.2** The selection of the appropriate language(s) of certificates should be based on adequacy for the importing country's purpose, comprehension by the certifying officer and minimizing unnecessary burden on the exporting country.

## **5. THE FORMAT AND USE OF MODEL CERTIFICATES**

### **5.1 FORMAT**

**5.1.1 Model Sanitary Certificate (ANNEX I)** - The format of the model sanitary certificate should be considered when developing a certificate to attest that fish and fishery products contained in a shipment were produced in establishments that are under the control of and produced to the laws and requirements of the exporting country, or under conditions cited in equivalence or compliance agreements.

**5.1.2 Model Inspection Certificate (ANNEX II)** - The format of the model inspection certificate should be considered when developing a certificate to attest that the fish and fishery products contained in a shipment were produced in establishments that are under the control of and produced to the laws and requirements of the exporting country, or under conditions cited in equivalence or compliance agreements **and** that an inspection of finished product has been conducted by an inspector of the competent authority.

**5.1.3 Model Statement Document (ANNEX III and IV)** - Where a single certificate is not practical to

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<sup>4</sup> Draft Guidelines for the Generic Official Certificate Formats and the Production and Issuance of Certificates (Alinorm 01/30A, Appendix II) as adopted by the 24<sup>th</sup> Session of the CAC

handle all the requirements of the importing country or where special inspection requirements for an importing country exist, a model statement document could also be considered. The model statement document can be attached to the primary sanitary/ inspection certificate stating the actual monitoring tests conducted and the resulting levels. For example, such tests might include monitoring radioactivity or trace metals contaminants.

## 5.2 USE

Each field of the Model Sanitary or Inspection Certificate must be filled in or else, marked in a manner that would prevent alteration of the certificate. The Model Certificates should contain and completed as follows:

- 5.2.1 **Reference Number** should be unique for each consignment and should be maintained and assigned by the competent authority of the exporting country. Where more than one certificate is issued for a consignment as stipulated in 5.1.3 above, each certificate should bear the identical reference number.
- 5.2.2 **Country of Dispatch** for the purposes of the model certificate, designates the name of the country [in which the fish and fishery products was last handled] [[of the competent authority which has jurisdiction over the production establishment].
- 5.2.3 **Competent authority**<sup>5</sup> is the competent official organisation empowered to execute various functions. Its responsibility may include the management of official systems of inspection or certification at the regional or local level.
- 5.2.4 **Inspection body**<sup>6</sup> is the government organization empowered by the country legislation to establish food commerce requirements. Such requirements embrace those intended for the public health, consumer protection and the suitable conditions for a fair competition.
- 5.2.5 **State or type of processing** describes the state in which the fish and fishery product is presented (i.e. fresh, frozen, canned , etc.) and/or the processing methods used (i.e. smoked, breaded, etc.).
- 5.2.6 **Type of packaging** could be cartons, boxes, bags, cases, drums, barrels, pallets, etc.
- 5.2.7 **Lot identifier / Date code** is the lot identification system developed by a processor to account for their production of fish and fishery product thereby facilitating traceability of the product in the event of public health investigations and recalls.
- 5.2.8 **Means of transport** should describe the flight/train/truck/container number, as appropriate and the name of the air carrier, vessel, etc.
- 5.2.9 **Attestation** is a statement confirming the product or batches of products' conformity with regulatory requirements of the importing or exporting country or other international requirements.
- 5.2.10 **Original Certificate** should be identifiable and this status should be displayed appropriately with the mark "ORIGINAL" or if a copy is necessary, this certificate should be marked as "COPY" or terms of this effect. The term "REPLACEMENT" is reserved for use on certificates where, for any good and sufficient reason (such as damage to the certificate in transit), a replacement certificate is issued by the certifying officer.
- 5.2.11 **Page numbering** should be used where the certificate occupies more than one sheet of paper.

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<sup>5</sup> Guidelines for the Development of Equivalence Agreements Regarding Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CAC/GL 34-1999)

<sup>6</sup> Workshop on Seafood Inspection (January 1998) - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), AGR/FI(98)10/FINAL





**PROPOSED DRAFT MODEL INSPECTION CERTIFICATE**  
**covering Fish and Fishery Products**  
 (At Step 3 of the Procedure)

*(LETTERHEAD or LOGO)*Reference  
number: \_\_\_\_\_

Country of Dispatch:	Tel:
Competent Authority:	Fax:
Inspection Body:	E-mail: (optional)

**I. Details identifying the fishery products**

Description - Species (scientific name)	State or type of processing	Type of packaging	Lot Identifier/ date code	Number of packages	Net weight
Sum:					

Temperature required during storage and \_\_\_\_\_ °C  
 transport: \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Provenance of the fishery products**

Address(es) and/or Registration number(s) of production establishment(s) authorized for exports by competent authority:

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Name and address of consignor: \_\_\_\_\_

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**III. Destination of the fishery products**

The fishery products are to be dispatched from: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Place of dispatch)

to: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Country and place of destination)

by the following means of transport: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of consignee and address at place of destination: \_\_\_\_\_

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**IV. Attestation**

The undersigned official inspector hereby certifies that at the time of inspection:

- 1) The products described above originate from (an) approved establishment(s) and
- 2) have been handled, prepared or processed, identified, stored and transported under a competent HACCP and sanitary programme consistently implemented and in accordance with the requirements laid down in Codex Alimentarius' Recommended International Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products, CAC/RCP xx-xxxx.
- 3) Comply with Codex Alimentarius's Standard for ( xxxxxxxx fish), CODEX STAN xx-xxxx.

Done at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_  
(Place) (Date)

**(SEAL)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of official inspector) (Name and official position)



( LOGO )

( COUNTRY )

( NAME OF COMPETENT AUTHORITY )

**STATEMENT CONCERNING RADIOACTIVITY LEVEL IN FISH**

ISSUED BY (NAME OF THE INSPECTION BODY) FOR FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS

As Addendum to Sanitary/Inspection Certificate no.: \_\_\_\_\_

One of the main tasks of (Name of the Inspection Body) for fish and fishery products is to guarantee the wholesomeness and good quality of fish and fishery products exported from (Name of Country).

The level of radioactive caesium 134 and caesium 137 in fish of commercial value is monitored by the (Name of Competent Authority). The monitoring programme started in (year) and in no instances the level of radioactivity has been found to exceed the natural background level.

The detection limit for this analysis is ... Bq/kg for caesium 134 and caesium 137 combined.

(Name of Inspection Body)

(Sign.)

Director General of (Name of Competent Authority)

(Sign.)

Head of (Name of Division)

Done at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ 20 \_\_\_\_  
 (Place) (Date)

(SEAL) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Signature of Official Inspector) (Name and official position)

( LOGO )

( COUNTRY )

( NAME OF COMPETENT AUTHORITY )

**STATEMENT CONCERNING TRACE METALS IN  
(NAME OF FISH SPECIES + SCIENTIFIC NAME)**

ISSUED BY (NAME OF THE INSPECTION BODY) FOR FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS

**As Addendum to Sanitary/Inspection Certificate no.:** \_\_\_\_\_

One of the main tasks of (Name of the Inspection Body) for fish and fishery products is to guarantee the wholesomeness and good quality of fish and fishery products exported from (Name of Country).

To this end, microbiological, chemical and organoleptical analyses are performed.

Chemical analyses of the following trace metals have been performed for (Name fish species + scientific name), all values are in milligrams per kg wet weight:

Mercury (Hg)	:	.....
Cadmium (Cd)	:	.....
Lead (Pb)	:	.....
Other metals	:	.....

These concentrations represent normal values for fish caught in open sea. It will be seen that all values are low, and well below permissible concentrations for those trace metals where limiting values have been given by international regulating bodies.

(Name of Inspection Body)

(Sign.)

(Sign.)

Director General of (Name of Competent Authority)

Head of (Name of Division)

Done at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ 20 \_\_\_\_  
(Place) (Date)

(SEAL) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Official Inspector) (Name and official position)

## COMMENTS RECEIVED IN REPLY TO CL 2000/20-FFP

**ESPAÑA**

*Este proyecto no puede avanzar hasta el trámite 5, debido a que no respeta las líneas generales establecidas por el CCFICS, en cuya 9ª reunión se ha adoptado el proyecto de directrices para formatos genéricos de certificados oficiales que no coinciden en líneas generales con el contenido del apéndice VIII del CCFFP.*

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**SPAIN (English version)**

*This Proposed Draft cannot be advanced to Step 5, because it does not follow the guidelines established by CCFICS, that finalized at its 9<sup>th</sup> Session the Draft Guidelines for Generic Official Certificate Formats and the Production and Issuance of Certificates, which is not generally consistent with the text in Appendix VIII of the CCFFP.*