

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

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JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME CODEX COMMITTEE ON FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION

VIRTUAL

20 SEPTEMBER – 25 OCTOBER 2021

Opening speeches

Opening of the 35th Session of the Committee on Fish and Fishery Products from Mr Odd Emil Ingebrigtsen, the Minister of Fisheries and Seafood, the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries

We are pleased to welcome all members to the 35th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Committee on Fish and Fishery Products.

It has been testing times with the COVID-19 pandemic affecting not only our lives, but the way we work. Whilst we look forward to the day when we again may meet in person, we shall make the most of our digital tools.

Codex Alimentarius and the Committee's work remains crucial in protecting consumers and ensuring fair practises in food trade. Seafood remains, according to the FAO, one of the world's most traded commodities.

At the same time we note the increasing attention to the importance of aquatic food for food security and nutrition, especially in light of the Sustainable Development Goals and upcoming UN summit on Food Systems. Our ambition is to develop even more sustainable food systems, where aquatic food will play an integral role.

Providing more food from the oceans and inland waters, in a sustainable fashion, will not diminish work of the Committee, but rather underline the importance of its work in developing common reference points and technical guidelines to ensure fair, harmonises global trade.

We wish all members best of luck at this week's session of the Committee, and we hope for constructive and engaging talks.

Yours sincerely,

The Minister of Fisheries and Seafood, Odd Emil Ingebrigtsen

Welcome speech from Ms Ingunn Midttun Godal, the Director General of the Norwegian Food Safety Authority

Distinguished delegates,

As Director General of the Norwegian Food Safety Authority, it is a pleasure for me to welcome you all to the 35th session of Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP). It is also a pleasure for me to introduce the new chair Vigdis Veum Møllersen. Vigdis has long experience working with Codex in general and the fishery Committee in particular. She has been working closely with the former chairman Bjørn Røthe Knudsen which has now retired. I am confident that Vigdis will lead you all through the forthcoming discussions with a firm hand.

The covid-19 pandemic has affected the way we work. The fact that it is difficult to meet each other has improved our ability to have digital meetings. The digital platform facilitates meeting where all countries can attend and contribute. Meeting each other in person is of course important, but we also need to continue to explore digital communication.

The Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP) has a long history and plays a vital role in the important work of international standards. I know that important work is ahead of you all for the coming month and wish you all constructive work and good results.

Ingunn Midttun Godal

Director General

Welcome speech from Ms Vigdis S. Veum Mollersen, the Chairperson of Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products

Dear delegates,

It is a pleasure for me to welcome you to the 35th session of Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products (CCFFP). The first CCFFP session was held in 1966 and the committee has a long history, having developed 28 Codex standards until now. Many of you have participated in this committee in the past and some are new. You are all very welcome.

The Committee has been adjourned sine die for 6 years until it was revoked in 2020 when CAC43 agreed on new work 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.

Being the new Chairperson of CCFFP, I am excited to begin this work and I am looking forward to working with you all. Although the role as Chairperson is new to me, I know this committee well, having worked with it since 2008.

The Committee will work by correspondence using the draft guideline presented for adoption to CAC44. I would like to ask for your indulgence when it comes to this working method and I hope that together we will find a good way of succeeding with the task given to us.

I assume you are well prepared and that you have familiarized yourself with the working methods and procedures that apply for this specific task. I am of course referring to the Procedure for the Inclusion of Additional Species in Codex standards for Fish and Fishery products, in short, the Inclusion Procedure, which you will find in the Procedural manual.

To take you back to what has been done already; In December 2020, a Circular Letter (CL 2020/61/OCS REV-FFP) was issued requesting 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). Seventeen Member countries and the European Union provided comments in response to this Circular Letter. While the comments were generally positive to the establishment of the EWG, some requested further considerations regarding the chairing of the EWG, the Terms of Reference for the EWG, and selection of sardine species for sensory evaluation. We will deal with these matters during this session.

To manage the discussion, a tentative timetable has been developed, which you can find on the CCFFP35 page on the Codex website. We will follow it for this session. Any changes will be published in the user group CCFFP35 on this online forum and on the CCFFP35 page. I expect you as delegates to provide your inputs according to the timetable. The timetable informs about the time in which each agenda item is open for discussion. For us to secure progress during the session, I will close each agenda item according to the timetable.

I also have a kind request that those of you who have not yet identified your head of delegation, to please do so in the ORS, and I would also like to remind you that only the Head delegate will be able to submit comments/interventions.

Looking forward to working with you all,

Vigdis S. Veum Mollersen

Welcome speech from Ms Esther Garrido Gamarro on behalf of FAO and WHO

Dear distinguished delegates, dear colleagues,

It is my pleasure, on behalf of FAO and WHO, to welcome you to CCFFP35. It is very exciting to see delegates getting together after 6 years. During this period, relevant issues for the Committee have been addressed through other committees, and FAO and WHO have been very active in the area of scientific advice for the sector.

FAO and WHO will closely follow the online discussions of CCFFP35 and provide the necessary expert scientific advice to the session, as well as following up on any issues that might arise.

We wish you a successful session!

Welcome speech from Dr Hilde Kruse, the Codex Secretariat

Dear distinguished delegates, dear colleagues around the world!

Welcome to the forum for CCFFP35!

On 20 September 2021, at 12h (noon) CEST, CCFFP35 will officially open and its deliberations will start.

CCFFP35 is working by correspondence. Thus, all information exchanges and discussions will take place on this forum, until 20 October, to ensure maximum transparency of the discussions. The report adoption will take place as a live virtual meeting, using the Zoom platform, - on 25 October 2021.

A tentative timetable is available on the CCFFP35 webpage of the Codex website. This schedule provides an overview of the comment/discussion periods proposed for each of the agenda items. Please note that all times are indicated in Central European Time (CEST).

The provisional agenda and related documents (including a video and a message from the Chairperson of CCFFP) are also available on the CCFFP35 webpage.

The Codex Secretariat will closely follow the online discussions. The role of the Codex Secretariat in the discussions will be the same as in a physical meeting: to introduce certain items as requested by the Chairperson, provide procedural guidance, address any specific questions or clarifications from the participants as they arise, support the Chairperson as required, record the discussions, and prepare the report.

For the online discussions, introductions and any relevant documents will be provided in English only. However, a translation function is embedded in the forum.

The same rules that apply to physical sessions will also apply to this online discussion:

- Interventions should be made by the Heads of delegations only;
- Interventions should be focused on the topic of discussion and be clear in terms of the position of the delegation or any proposal being made;
- Members and Observers are invited to provide comments in a timely manner to further facilitate the discussion.

The discussion will begin with the adoption of the agenda followed by the items as agreed by the Committee. As it is noted in physical sessions, "Other Business" will only be discussed if time is available. At the end of the discussion of each agenda item, the Chairperson will propose a conclusion that will be open for commenting for 24 hours.

The draft report will be made available at least 24 hours prior to the start of the report adoption and published on the CCFFP35 webpage in English, French and Spanish.

The Codex Secretariat remains ready to support Members and Observers as necessary.

Wishing CCFFP35 constructive and fruitful deliberations!