

COMMISSION DU CODEX ALIMENTARIUS



Organisation des Nations Unies
pour l'alimentation
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Agenda Item 9.1

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FAO/WHO JOINT FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR AFRICA

Twenty-fifth session

Kampala (Uganda)

27-31 January 2025

PROPOSAL FOR NEW WORK

PROPOSAL FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A REGIONAL STANDARD FOR “KETIAKH”

(Prepared by Senegal)

DISCUSSION PAPER

BACKGROUND

At the CCAFRICA session in 2022, Senegal briefly presented a proposal for new work, as outlined in document CRD09. It was noted that “ketiakh”, a braised or boiled dried fish product, is mainly produced and traded in West Africa, and is also popular with members of the African diaspora in Europe and the Americas.

This proposal will be discussed under Agenda Item 9.1 at the CCAFRICA25 session, scheduled for 27 to 31 January 2025.

INTRODUCTION

Ketiakh is a braised or boiled dried fish product primarily made from round or flat sardinella. Other small pelagic fish species, such as mackerel, *Ethmalosa fimbriata* (commonly known as bonga shad), and horse mackerel, may also be used.

Producers employ two distinct processes, as shown in the following diagrams:



Product before drying

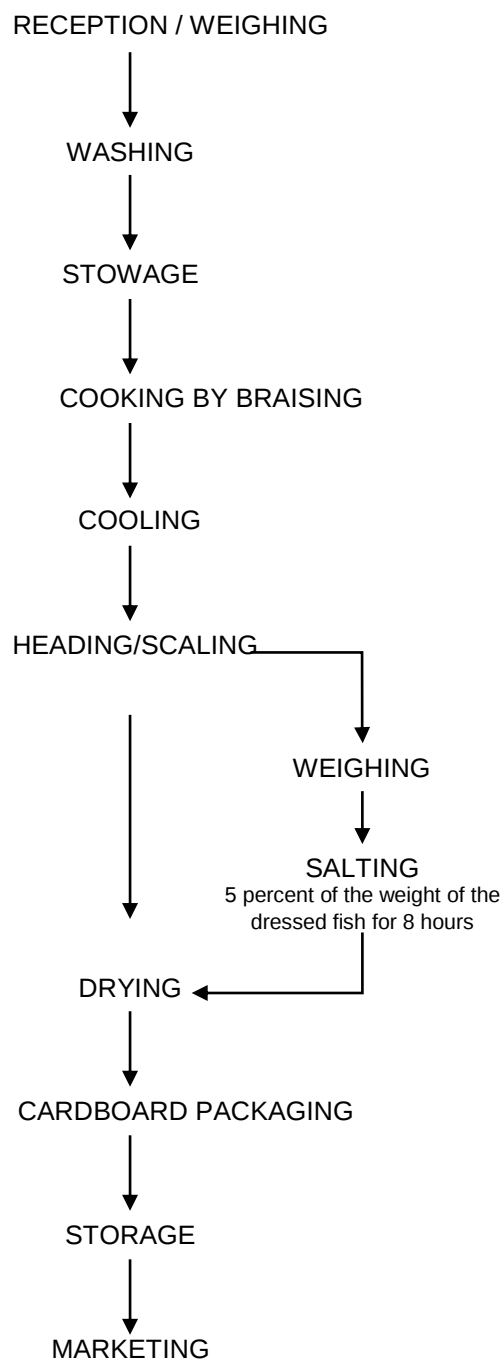


Bone-in product

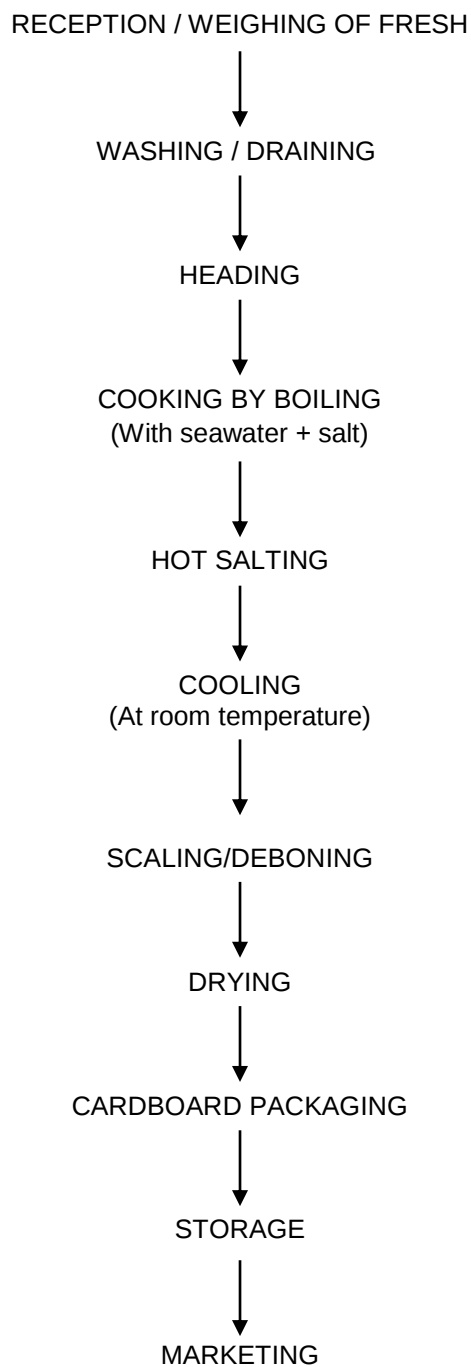


Finished product at boning stage

**Diagram of *ketiakh* braised dried fish
production process**



**Diagram of *ketiakh* boiled dried fish production
process**



OBJECTIVE

This regional standard aims to establish the identity and quality characteristics of *ketiakh* for regional and international trade in order to protect consumer health and promote fair and equitable trade of this product within Africa and globally.

THE NEED FOR A STANDARD

The Codex has developed two key standards for processed fishery products widely consumed in Senegal and throughout the African region. These are Codex Standard CXS 311-2013, which covers smoked, smoke-flavoured and smoke-dried fish, and Codex Standard CXS 167-1989, which applies to salted fish and dried salted fish of the *Gadidae* family. However, the manufacturing processes for *ketiakh* are specific and not addressed by the aforementioned international standards.

METHODOLOGY

In developing the regional standard for *ketiakh*, it is necessary to consider the scope, common quality parameters, and shared safety criteria, including contaminants, hygiene, food additives, and labelling requirements.

The FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CAFRICA) will lead this work with support from the Codex Secretariat.

Codex Member Nations should also provide comments and suggestions at relevant stages of the standard's development.

RECOMMENDATION

CAFRICA is invited to assess the importance and necessity of developing this standard, considering that setting minimum quality requirements could provide the sole benchmark. The project document for the proposed new work is enclosed as Annex I.

PROPOSAL FOR NEW WORK**DEVELOPMENT OF A REGIONAL STANDARD FOR *KETIAKH*, A BRAISED OR BOILED DRIED FISH PRODUCT****PROJECT DOCUMENT****1. PURPOSE**

This document recommends the development of a regional standard for *ketiakh*, a braised or boiled dried fish product.

2. OBJECTIVE

This standard aims to define the product's identity and quality characteristics for regional and international trade, seeking to protect consumer health and promote fair and equitable trade of the product.

3. PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

Braised or boiled dried fish, known as *ketiakh*, is made from round or flat sardinella (or other pelagic fish species such as mackerel, bonga shad, and horse mackerel). The fish is braised or boiled, headed, gutted, skinned, deboned, optionally salted, and sun-dried.

4. RELEVANCE AND CURRENT SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STANDARD

Despite advances in food preservation techniques, particularly freezing, refrigeration, and brining, traditional preservation methods such as drying, smoking, braising, and salting still play a significant role in enhancing the value of food products in many countries.

Traditional preservation methods are widely used in many countries of the African region to preserve various perishable products. These include braised or boiled fish – headed, gutted, optionally skinned, optionally deboned, optionally salted, and sun-dried – which is widely consumed nationally and regionally. It is known as *ketiakh* in Senegal and Mauritania.

In Burkina Faso, a major *ketiakh* importer, it is called “*djegue wouala*” in the local Dioula language.

African communities in Europe, America, and Asia frequently seek out *ketiakh* because of their dietary habits. However, this demand cannot be fully met, as specifications allowing processors and producers to supply a standardized product are not available in countries like Senegal. This gap justifies the development of a regional standard for *ketiakh* to facilitate its trade.

A regional standard for *ketiakh* will contribute to protecting consumer health. It will be particularly beneficial for countries in the African region, which are the primary importers and consumers of these products. The quality of the products must meet consumer needs and comply with minimum food safety requirements.

5. MAIN ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED

- Description of manufacturing processes
- Requirements for raw materials and inputs
- Requirements for the finished product
- Packaging, labelling, transport, and storage
- Hygiene
- Organoleptic characteristics
- Organoleptic, microbiological, and physicochemical characteristics
- Contaminants
- Food additives
- Methods of sampling, inspection and analysis

6. EVALUATION AGAINST THE CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES**6.1. General criteria**

A *ketiakh* standard will help protect consumer health and will be particularly beneficial for African countries, which are the primary importers and consumers of these products.

The quality of the products must meet consumer needs and comply with minimum food safety requirements.

6.2. Product-specific criteria

6.2.1. Production volume

Senegal is the only West African country where this product is manufactured. However, nationals from neighbouring countries often relocate there to produce and export *ketiakh* to their home countries, thus promoting subregional trade. In 2022, Senegal's artisanal fisheries processed 28 747.73 tonnes of fish products, of which 15 463.98 tonnes (53.8 percent) were *ketiakh*. Domestic consumption accounted for 8 319.49 tonnes, or 53.8 percent of total production.

6.2.2. Markets

There is strong demand on the African market for artisanally processed products. Trade volumes between subregional countries are substantial. In 2022, Senegal exported 7 144.49 tonnes of *ketiakh*, with an estimated commercial value of nearly 3.69 billion CFA francs. The primary destinations included Burkina Faso, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea (Conakry), Guinea-Bissau, Ghana, Benin, and Togo. However, within the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) framework, the absence of a regional standard for *ketiakh* could adversely affect its trade. It is important to note that food importers and consumers in this region increasingly seek out products that comply with Codex standards.

Therefore, the proposed new activity should facilitate the development of a regionally recognized standard that would strengthen regional trade and meet the requirements of both importers and consumers.

6.2.3. Diversity of legislation

There is currently no harmonized regional legislation for this specific type of foodstuff. Neither is there a recognized regional or international standard for the quality of *ketiakh*.

Developing a regional standard will contribute to harmonizing legislative and regulatory frameworks at the regional level, which will help protect consumers and facilitate regional trade in this product.

6.2.4. The product's suitability for standardization

International standards for processed fishery products have already been developed, including Codex Standard CXS 311-2013 for smoked, smoke-flavoured and smoke-dried fish, as well as Codex Standard CXS 167-1989 for salted fish and dried salted fish of the *Gadidae* family.

To date, there is no regional or international standard for *ketiakh*, a braised or boiled dried fish product, which differs from the products covered by the aforementioned Codex standards because of its production process (braised or boiled).

Developing a specific regional standard for this type of product in Africa would ensure consistency in product characteristics and provide a reliable foundation for promoting regional trade.

7. RELEVANCE TO CODEX STRATEGIC GOALS

The development of a Codex regional standard for *ketiakh* is consistent with the Codex Strategic Plan 2020–2025, which aims to promote the integration of Codex standards into national legislation and to facilitate international trade.

This initiative will contribute to achieving the following strategic objectives:

2.2 Promote the submission and use of globally representative data in developing and reviewing Codex standards (Strategic Goal 2: Develop standards based on science and Codex risk-analysis principles).

3.3 Recognize and promote the use and impact of Codex standards (Strategic Goal 3: Increase impact through the recognition and use of Codex standards).

4.2 Facilitate the participation of all Codex Members throughout the standard-setting process (Strategic Goal 4: Facilitate member participation).

8. PROPOSED WORK SCHEDULE

STEPS	DATE
Review of new work by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 25th session	2025
Review of new work by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) at its 48th session	2025
Review at Step 3 of the draft standard by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 26th Session	2027
Adoption at Step 5 by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) at its 50th session	2027
Review at Step 5 (or 5/8) of the draft standard by the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA) at its 27th session	2029
Review at Step 8 for adoption by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) at its 52nd session	2029

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3. *Plan stratégique CCAFRICA* [CCAFRICA Strategic Plan];
4. *Statistiques DPM* [DPM Statistics];
5. *Rapport sur les conditions de longue conservation du poisson transformé (KECCAX) à Cayar, Avril 2013, Dr Absa GUEYE, Dr Khalifa Serigne Babacar SYLLA, du projet APTE/FNH : « Appui à la réduction de la pauvreté féminine à Cayar pour une meilleure valorisation du poisson braisé séché »* [Report on long-term storage conditions for processed fish (KECCAX) in Cayar, April 2013, by Absa Gueye and Khalifa Serigne Babacar Sylla, under the APTE/FNH Project: “Support for reducing women’s poverty in Cayar through better valorization of braised dried fish”].