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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

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

EXPERT CONSULTATION ON DATA FORMATS AND PROCEDURES FOR MONITORING, CONTROL AND SURVEILLANCE

BERGEN, NORWAY
25 to 27 OCTOBER 2004

USE OF CUSTOMS TARIFF CODES IN MCS

1. Since 1983 the Customs Cooperation Council has been using a combined tariffs/statistical nomenclature for the declaration of goods at importation. Generally referred as the "Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System" or Harmonized System (HS), this nomenclature covers a broad range of goods and services and includes fisheries commodities.
2. The HS covers live, fresh and frozen fish, crustacean, mollusks and other aquatic invertebrates, as well as prepared fish and shellfish. The HS has been revised several times, but its categories tend to lean toward those familiar to North Atlantic consumers. Consequently, it requires further improvement to enable the monitoring of economic trends world-wide, and particularly in the Southern Hemisphere. For purely practical reasons, the World Customs Organization (WCO) is also promoting a simplification of the classification, so that items of low trade value might be eliminated.
3. The WCO continues to deliberate over two possible revision strategies. The first, traditional in nature, would differentiate between capture and culture, and then break down these two categories into six others, based upon EU classifications: freshwater and diadromous fish; flatfish; pelagics; groundfish; crustaceans; and mollusks. Finally, each product would be tagged with one of eight classifications:
 - live for food, for ornamental use, for on-growing;
 - fresh and chilled: whole, fillets, loins;
 - frozen: whole, fillets, loins meat, surimi;
 - smoked: whole, fillets, loins;
 - dried, salted and brine (not smoked): whole, fillets, meat; roes;
 - canned: in air-tight cans, in pouches, in glass jars; and
 - value-added products: crackers, sauces, hamburgers, balls, pastes, fermented products, etc.

4. The second strategy is more radical and calls for full information of a product to be given in a bar code. The bar code would be prepared when a product was certified for the export market, and would be controlled by the competent authority. Similar to the practice in supermarkets, customs officers would scan the bar codes to access required data and update databases.