



**JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME
CODEX COMMITTEE ON FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS**

**Thirty-fourth Session
Ålesund, Norway
19 – 24 October 2015**

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE WORK OF FAO AND WHO

Technical Guidelines for development and implementation of a bivalve sanitation programme within the framework of Section 7 of the Codex Code of Practice for fish and fishery products (CAC/RCP52-2003)

1. FAO and WHO are undertaking a programme of work to develop practical technical guidance on the development of shellfish sanitation systems within the framework of Section 7 of the *Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products* (CAC/RCP 52-2003). The need for international level guidance was specifically identified by the 2nd International Conference on Molluscan Shellfish Sanitation representing 15 major bivalves producing and trading countries and supported by CCFFP33 and the 14th Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries Sub-Committee on Fish Trade. In developing these guidelines, FAO and WHO are aiming to build upon the experiences and data of member countries to develop technically and scientifically sound guidance. To this end, FAO/WHO issued a call for data in September 2014 and convened a meeting of a Core Group of Experts in Rome on 26-28 November, 2014. The Core Group of Experts agreed on the scope of the Technical Guidelines and an annotated scoping document was presented for stakeholder consultation at the 10th International Conference on Molluscan Shellfish Safety (ICMSS) held at Puerto Varas, Chile during 15-20 March, 2015.
2. The Technical Guidelines are now being prepared and the preliminary version is expected to be finalized at an expert meeting to be held in Rome on November 24-27 2015. The scoping document can be accessed online¹ and CCFFP members are invited to provide comments and feedback on this. Any comments and feedback received from CCFFP members will be discussed during this forthcoming expert meeting.
3. Pilot implementation of the Technical Guidelines is being planned in selected countries in southern Africa and in some countries in Latin America during 2016. Feedback from the pilot implementation will be taken into consideration in the finalization of the guidance.

Technical Paper on Biotxin Toxicity Equivalency Factors

4. While discussing the draft Performance Criteria for reference and confirmatory analytical methods for marine biotoxins to be included in the *Standard for Live and Raw Bivalve Molluscs* (CODEX STAN 292-2008) the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS) encouraged CCFFP to provide toxicity equivalency factors (TEF) for all toxins included in the standard. The CCFFP33 felt that it was premature to include TEF as part of the standard as more information to establish TEF was becoming available from recent and ongoing scientific work and requested FAO to make available the information on TEF in a form that can be easily updated. FAO agreed to develop a Technical Paper explaining the scientific background for the work on TEF and the current state of knowledge. FAO and WHO are working with a Team of Experts to develop the Technical paper, which is now at an early drafting stage. FAO/WHO expect to finalize the Technical Paper by early 2016 and make it available freely through the FAO and WHO websites

Technical brief on nitrogen factors

¹ Report of the JOINT FAO/WHO EXPERT MEETING ON GUIDANCE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SHELLFISH SANITATION PROGRAMS can be accessed at <http://ftp.fao.org/codex/meetings/ccffp/ccffp34/Shellfish%20Sanitation%20Initiation%20meeting%20Report%20%20final%20for%20CCFFP.pdf>

5. The CCFFP33 agreed that the table providing available data on seafood nitrogen factors and the procedure to determine nitrogen factors should be made available through FAO website. This was agreed based on the understanding that the task to put together the information based on published papers and to update them as new papers become available would be undertaken by the United States or United Kingdom. Accordingly, the United Kingdom provided FAO with a Technical Brief on seafood nitrogen factors prepared by the Analytical methods Committee of the Royal Society of Chemistry. This Technical brief has been posted in FAO GLOBEFISH website and can be freely downloaded using the link: <http://www.globefish.org/seafood-nitrogen-factors.html>. Globefish is a unit in FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department responsible for international fish trade. The Globefish website has a databank, which is often accessed by fishery industry and national competent authorities.

Planning interagency collaboration in work on ciguatera

6. Considering a request by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) Panel on Harmful Algal Blooms (IPHAB), FAO is consulting with WHO, IOC and IAEA about the development of a coordinated action plan to help member countries address the public health risk of ciguatera fish poisoning. A meeting of the representatives of the agencies will be held in FAO on December 14, 2015. The meeting is expected to discuss ways to combine the expertise of the different agencies in order to address issues such as detection of the causative agent, toxin detection, sampling, monitoring, epidemiological data collection, reporting and risk management strategies.

Antimicrobial resistance

7. FAO and WHO continue to work on activities to strengthen national capacities along the food chain and reduce risks from food borne pathogens. A main focus is reducing the potential emergence of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in microorganisms in the animal health and public health sectors, by promoting prudent use and reducing inappropriate antimicrobial use including in food animal production. These activities include FAO/WHO collaboration in field projects to strengthen national/regional capacities and systems for the detection, monitoring, regulation and management of foodborne pathogen contamination and AMR along the food chain. In addition, the joint projects have informed the development of appropriate national policies and the promotion of good animal husbandry and preventive medicine, and food hygiene practices along the food chain. The past year has also seen a lot of discussion at international level on the urgent need to tackle the issue of AMR. Particular highlights of the past year include:

8. The adoption of a resolution on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) by the 67th Session of World Health Assembly (WHA) in May 2014.

9. The adoption by the 68th WHA in May 2015 of a Global Action Plan (GAP)² to combat antimicrobial resistance, which was developed following the request of the 67th WHA (May 2014) (WHA67.25), by a drafting process with active participation of FAO and OIE, as well as WHO Member States was undertaken³.

10. The discussions by Member countries of the role of FAO in addressing AMR at the governing body level resulting in the adoption of an FAO Resolution on AMR in food and agriculture by the 39th FAO conference in June 2015⁴

11. The recognition that food systems need to contribute to preventing and addressing infectious diseases, including zoonotic diseases, and tackling antimicrobial resistance in the Rome Declaration on Nutrition⁵ and related Framework for Action adopted by the Second FAO/WHO International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2, 19-21 November 2014) and endorsed by the 68th WHA (May 2015) and 39th Session of the FAO conference (June 2015).

12. The WHO Advisory Group on Integrated Surveillance of Antimicrobial Resistance (WHO-AGISAR), established in 2008 to support WHO's effort to minimize the public health impact of antimicrobial resistance associated with the use of antimicrobials in food producing animals, held its 6th meeting 10-12 June 2015 in Seoul, Republic of Korea, to develop a five-year strategic plan following the planned adoption of the Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (see above), and to review progress and lessons learnt from the AGISAR pilot projects.

² http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA68/A68_20-en.pdf

³ <http://www.who.int/drugresistance/en/>

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mo153e.pdf> (See paras 43-45)

⁵ Rome Declaration on Nutrition. Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ml542e.pdf>

13. WHO-AGISAR country pilot projects on integrated surveillance of antimicrobial resistance continued and are currently ongoing in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Latin America. New projects were initiated in Bangladesh and Uganda in 2014. Together with FAO a pilot surveillance for antimicrobial resistance in the aquaculture sector in Vietnam was initiated. FAO and WHO are looking out for extra budgetary support to extend this surveillance programme in other countries producing aquaculture products.

14. The preparation of an FAO Technical Paper on “The Global State of Antimicrobial Resistance in Food and Agriculture 2015: Impact, trends, data gaps and recommendations”.

15. A key theme among the above highlights is that in addressing the issue of AMR it needs to be recognized that both the contributing factors and the consequences, including economic and others, go beyond health, and that there is a need for a coherent, comprehensive and integrated “One Health” approach, involving different actors and sectors such as human and veterinary medicine, agriculture, finance, environment and consumers, and strengthened tripartite collaboration between FAO, OIE and WHO for combating antimicrobial resistance.

16. Further details are available in CX/CAC15/38/16 Add.1. (ftp://ftp.fao.org/codex/meetings/cac/cac38/cac38_16_add1e.pdf)

Dissemination of trade related information

17. FAO has been disseminating trade related information through the website www.globefish.org. The FAO GLOBEFISH Project is a part of FAO FISHINFO Network and regularly brings out three types of publications (a) Commodity update (b) Price reports (c) Globefish research programme. The Commodity update provides information on market trends and market access issues related to specific commodities like shrimp, cephalopods, bivalves. Globefish Research programme publishes reports of research carried out on specific topics e.g. fishery byproducts, Japanese market for seafood, European market for bivalves. During the 33rd Session of CCFFP, FAO offered to post information such as optional product requirements in this website. Though FAO did not receive any such information to be posted, FAO would like to reiterate willingness to disseminate any trade related information that this 34th session may desire.

Histamine sampling tool

18. FAO and WHO continue to welcome feedback on the histamine sampling tool which is available at <http://www.fstools.org/histamine>. Feedback from users of the histamine sampling tool received over the past year is currently being considered by the secretariat who is reviewing potential modifications that would expand the application of the tool.

Forthcoming Publications

19. The following publications will be available on line in the coming months:

- Risk Assessment tools for *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* and *Vibrio vulnificus* associated with seafood: Meeting report. Microbiological Risk Assessment Series 20 - FAO/WHO.
- *Salmonella* spp. in bivalve molluscs: Meeting report. Microbiological Risk Assessment Series 21 - FAO/WHO.
- Guidance on the selection and application of methods for the detection and enumeration of human pathogenic *Vibrio* spp. in seafood. Microbiological Risk Assessment Series 22 - FAO/WHO.