GENERAL

IAFI: World Seafood Congress

Around 200 delegates attended the IAFI *World Seafood Congress* held at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC, USA. The event was hosted jointly by IAFI and the *National Fisheries Institute* (NFI) who is based in Washington, and was supported by FAO and UNIDO. Immediately preceding the conference 3 network meetings took place for the delegates from Africa, Asia and South Pacific and South America. These were all well attended and covered specific issues from each of those areas. There was also a two day HACCP course. The popular student poster competition was again sponsored by the Grimsby Institute from Grimsby, UK. Poster Awards were given, but, unfortunately the winning students were unable to attend the Congress due to visa problems:

1st Place - Santohs Narayan Raju, Grimsby Institute
2nd Place - Anthony Sanoj, Grimsby Institute
3rd Place - Archana C K, Grimsby Institute.

During the conference IAFI made their awards to individuals in recognition of their contributions to the profession of Seafood Inspection, Science & Technology and related fields, in industry, academia government and/or related organizations. These were presented at the end of the opening session of the congress to Karla Ruzicka, Alicia O. Lustre, Evelyne Nusalim, and Simon Derrick. The *Special Presidential Awards*, were established this year to recognize these individuals long term and continuing commitment to IAFI, and were presented by Mike Dillon to John Emberley, Spencer Garrett, and Carlos Lima dos Santos

At the end of the conference IAFI President Mike Dillon handed over the Presidency to Chris Leftwich who is the Chief inspector to the Fishmongers' Company based in London, UK.

The next congress is scheduled to be held in St. John's, New Foundland, Canada from the 28th September - 4th October in 2013.

Peter Howgate Award

Welcome to the annual "*Peter Howgate Award*", a travel grant presented each year to a young fish technologist who has shown a promising start to his or her career. The Award is a tribute to Peter Howgate's work and career, and recognition of his immense and ongoing contribution to the field of fish technology and the people who work in it. The Award is set up by fish technology professionals around the world, with the help of the *Seafood HACCP Discussion List* community.

The award is open to anyone presently employed in any relevant position involving fish technology from any country. Relevant positions include commercial fishery sector, research or inspection roles. To be eligible for the 2012 prize, applicants must have been born on or later than 1 January 1982 (under 30 years as of 1st Jan 2012). All the information is on the site (www.peterhowgateaward.com) from where you can also download the 2012 Award rules plus the application form.

Source: Ian Goulding, Megapesca Lda., Rua Gago Coutinho, 2460 207 Alfeizerao, Portugal, Tel.+ 351 262 990 372, E-mail: megapesca@mail.telepac.pt

FAO/WHO: Public health risk of histamine

In the *Codex Alimentarius Commission*, there are several standards establishing the maximum levels of histamine for different fish and fishery products. FAO/WHO are currently involved in a review of the public health risk of histamine from fish and fishery products from a more general perspective, taking into account existing sampling plans, different maximum levels in products and risk reductions achieved by these at the national level. FAO/WHO want to ensure that all available and relevant information and data are at their disposal and have issued an international call for data to raise awareness about data needs and invite all interested parties to provide both organizations with any relevant information/data, particularly that which may not be readily available in the public domain.

Source: Dr. Peter K Ben Embarek, Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses, WHO, Geneva, Switzerland, benembarekp@who.int

New ISO standard on traceability of finfish to help improve food safety

The use of a new International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) standard - ISO 12875:2011 - on the traceability of finfish (section of marketable fish which is neither shellfish nor molluscs and has fins) products will help improve food safety by supplying stakeholders throughout the supply chain with accurate information about the origin and nature of these products.

The standard specifies how traded fishery products are to be identified, and the information to be generated and held on those products by each of the food businesses that physically trade them through the distribution chains. The standard deals with the distribution of marine-caught finfish and their products for human consumption from catch through to retailers or caterers. According to the secretary of the Working Group that developed the standard, the ISO 12875:2011, provides a generic basis for traceability and will help to guarantee the health protection of consumers and ensure fair practices in food trade of finfish products.

Potential users of the new standard include fishing vessels, vessel-landing businesses and auction markets, processors, transporters and storers, traders and wholesalers and retailers and caterers. A similar standard for farmed finfish distribution chains is also developed which is, ISO 12877:2011, Traceability of finfish products - Specification on the information to be recorded in farmed finfish distribution chains.

Source: INFOFISH *Trade News,* No. 20/2011

AFRICAN NEWS

IAFI African Network Meeting

The 5th *African Network for Fish Technology and Safety Workshop* was held on 2nd Oct 2011 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel Washington during the IAFI World Seafood Congress, Washington, DC, USA. The Workshop was attended by 27 participants from different countries and international organizations, including 10 African countries i.e. Angola (1), Gambia (1), Morocco (2), Mozambique (3), Namibia (1), South Africa (3), Seychelles (1), Tanzania (1), and Tunisia (1). Others came from IAFI, FAO (4), SARNISS, USA, Australia, UK, Portugal, India, Austria and Italy. Most of the participants were sponsored by FAO with the exception of participants from South Africa who were privately sponsored. A total of 11 presentations were made distributed through the 3 sessions of the meeting: (1) African Network, (2) Lesson learnt from export requirement compliance efforts over the past 15 years in Africa, and (3) Food Safety Challenges. The report of the IAFI African Network Workshop may be downloaded from the IAFI website www.iafi.net

ASIAN NEWS

FAO Tuna long lining project

The FAO Project TCP/RAS/3302(D) on "*Improving post-harvest practices and sustainable market development or long-line fisheries for tuna and other larger pelagic fish species in the Indian Ocean (India, Iran, Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka)*" was launched in Beruwala, Sri Lanka on 15 August 2011. The project aims to assist participating countries to have stronger and coherent technical capabilities to enable them to exploit and market, in a sustainable manner, their substantial pelagic resources through improved and appropriate technology and practices. The main concern is to improve fish quality by improving handling practices by the fishers during and after catch. More details on the project may be obtained by contacting Dr. Iddya Karunasagar, FAO HQs, Rome, E-mail: iddya.karunasagar@fao.org

CARIBBEAN NEWS

Integrated research and capacity development within the region

The *Caribbean EcoHealth Programme* (CEHP) is a research program structured to improve the capacity of health professionals in the Caribbean region to respond in integrative and innovative ways to ongoing and emerging environmental health challenges by means of multi-sectoral interventions. The CEHP program provides a successful example of how a collaborative research can lead not only to the generation of needed information, but also develop the capacity and capabilities to continue to do so independent of outside interventions.

Among the results of the CEHP's five (5) main research projects three (3) of them should be highlighted due to their interest to fish inspectors and quality controllers: (1) the Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) study has evaluated human exposures to POPs, heavy metals, pesticides, and zoonotic infections; (2) the Burden of Illness (BOI) studies have developed protocols for the testing of foodborne microorganisms, strengthen laboratory analytical capabilities, and determined the prevalence and incidence of food-borne illness, and (3) the Food Safety Training Program has developed Diploma, M.Sc Agri-Food Safety and Quality Assurance programmes.

Source: "*Strengthening integrated research and capacity development within the Caribbean region*." Forde et al. 2011. *BMC International Health and Human Rights*, 11 (Suppl 2): 57- 68.

EUROPEAN NEWS

European Commission: Freezing and parasites

The Commission passed a regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 regarding the minimum freezing treatment of fishery products to be consumed raw or uncooked, which is required to kill viable parasites. The amendment allows for some products to be exempted from this requirement (farmed fishery products and products from fishing grounds shown by the Competent Authority not to be subjected to the parasite hazard).

Source: *FishFile Lite*, Dec 2011, Megapesca

European Commission: Dioxins and dioxin like PCBs

The Commission approved a regulation adjusting the maximum permitted levels of dioxins and dioxin like PCBs in fish and marine oil products. The Regulation also extends the derogation regarding maximum limits in Finland, Sweden and Latvia. These countries may authorise the placing on their market of certain fishery products (salmon, herring, char, river lamprey and trout) originating in the Baltic region and intended for consumption in their territory with levels of dioxins and/or dioxin-like PCBs and/or non-dioxin-like PCBs higher than the limits set. A system must be in place to ensure that consumers are fully informed of the recommendations on consumption of these species.

Source: *FishFile Lite*, Dec 2011, Megapesca

EU: Molecular technologies to help tackle fishing fraud

The European Commission's Joint Research Centre's (JRC) new report shows how molecular technologies can help in the fight against illegal practices and support traceability - including of processed products such as canned fish - 'from ocean to fork'. Labelling fish and fish products with a false species name or declaring false geographic origins are two common fraudulent techniques in the fisheries sector. The report "Deterring illegal activities in the fisheries sector" describes how molecular methods, such as those based on DNA-technology, make it possible to identify species even in processed products, without the need for expert knowledge. The JRC report advocates making new molecular technologies available to European control and enforcement authorities.

It aims to promote an informed dialogue among the various stakeholders and proposes concrete measures such as stepping up dissemination of relevant information and advice to all stakeholders; giving analytical laboratories in the Member States access to common repositories of reference data and other relevant knowledge for the analysis of fish and fish products. These repositories could be similar to the "fishtrace" database, hosted by the JRC; a network of certified test laboratories to carry out analysis for control and enforcement purposes and to share harmonised and validated analytical protocols and ensuring full training of inspectors and laboratory staff for proper sample handling and analysis. The JRC is currently assessing costs and benefits based on data from more than 100 reported cases to facilitate the practical implementation of the technologies concerned. The costs of many of these technologies, in particular for DNA analysis, have been falling sharply.

Source: INFOFISH *International*, 5/2011.

Croatia: Workshop on Food Safety for producers and processors of carp

The Croatian aquaculture sector, in particular cyprinid farming, needs to be revitalised to improve its capacity to meet international requirements for aquaculture products and food safety. This will increase opportunities to export the fish to the EU. Carp consumption also needs to be boosted, both domestically and internationally. In recognition of this the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Eurofish International Organization and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development of Croatia organized a regional workshop with the title "Food safety management in carp farms and processing" on 26-28 October at the Croatian city Daruvar.

The main topics of the workshop were the EU hygiene package and its application in carp farms and in carp processing; health management of carps, principles of Good Hygiene Practices (GHP), HACCP and their application in fish processing. The latest requirements for the export of fish (including live fish) and fishery products into the EU were presented. Marketing carp in Europe, developments in carp prices on various markets and several examples of carp campaigns aimed at increasing carp consumption were discussed in the section on market issues. The workshop attracted 32 participants representing the competent authorities at the regional and national level, and the carp farming and processing industry. the last two days of the workshop were dedicated to practical visits to a processing plant and a carp farm

Source: Eurofish Magazine, 6/2011.

Faroe Islands: Results of EU Inspection Mission

The report describes the outcome of a Food and Veterinary Office audit in the Faroe Islands carried out from 14 to 23 June 2011, as part of its programme of inspections in third countries. The report concludes that there is an official system in place governing the production of fishery products intended for EU export; however the effectiveness of this system is undermined by shortcomings regarding inspections of small fishing vessels, official controls on fishery products and use of non-authorised additives. The report addresses to the Faroe Islands competent authority a number of recommendations aimed at rectifying identified shortcomings and enhancing the control system in place.

Source: Final Report of a Mission carried to Faroe Islands (June 22011) available at: http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_inspection_ref=2011-6145

LATIN AMERICAN NEWS

Peru: Report of EU Inspection Mission

The report (DG-SANCO 2011-8890) describes the outcome of an audit carried out by the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) in Peru from 16 to 23 June 2011, as part of its audit programme in Member States and third countries. The primary objective of the audit was to evaluate the public health conditions for the production of bivalve molluscs intended for export to the European Union. The report concludes that a well implemented control system and monitoring plan are in place. Improvements have been noted since the 2009 inspection visit as regards classification of production areas, monitoring of biotoxins, accreditation of laboratories, analytical methods used in the context of official control and establishments. Nevertheless, despite improvements, some shortcomings were noted in relation to the classification and the monitoring of live bivalve molluscs production areas. Provided the identified shortcomings are corrected, the system of official controls should allow satisfactory guarantees to be provided that bivalve mollusc production meets the relevant EU requirements. The report addresses to the Peruvian competent authority a number of recommendations aimed at rectifying identified shortcomings and enhancing the control system in place.

Source: Final Report of a Mission carried out to Peru (June 2011) available at http://ec.europa.eu/food/fvo/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_id=2759

NORTH AMERICAN NEWS

Canada: Course offerings at the Marine Institute Winter 2012

The Marine Institute is very pleased to offer the following courses within the Post-graduate Certificate in Quality Management Program: Quality Management, Food Safety Systems, Introduction to Process Control, and Fundamentals of Project Management. Please be advised that all courses are web-based. Detailed information may be found on the Marine Institute homepage at http://www.mi.mun.ca/QM/ or directly contact Elaine E. Kennedy, Chair, Post-graduate Certificate in Quality Management, Marine Institute of Memorial University, St. John's NL Canada, Tel: 709-778-0502, Fax: 709-778-0535, Email: Elaine.Kennedy@mi.mun.ca

Canada: New regulatory requirements for aquatic animals

From 10 December 2011, there will be new requirements for all aquatic animals (finfish, molluscs, and crustaceans) imported into Canada. All aquatic animals must be declared at the border, and those listed in Schedule III of the Health of Animals Regulations may also require an aquatic animal

health import permit. The process for the administration and application for an aquatic animal health import permit can be found at: http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/imp/perme.shtml.

Aquatic animal health import permits will be required for live aquatic animals listed in Schedule III and for their carcasses or offal, and must be obtained before these aquatic animals can be imported or introduced into Canada. Aquatic animal health import permits will not be required for pet aquatic animals that meet specific requirements, aquatic animals on Schedule III that meet the requirements for personal use, aquatic animals that are eviscerated (gutted), products derived from aquatic animals already processed, packaged products derived from aquatic animals, and ready-to-eat products derived from aquatic animals. The Automated Import Reference System (AIRS) will indicate which aquatic animal commodities will require an aquatic animal health import permit and zoosanitary certification by an exporting country.

Source: INFOFISH *International*, 6/2011.

USA: FDA to step up import inspections

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced recently a new strategy to help ensure the safety and quality of imported drugs and food products, including seafood. The plan, which calls for coalitions of international regulators and increased data sharing, was created in response to rapidly rising imports of FDA-regulated products and a complex global supply chain. The strategy is outlined in a special report called the Pathway to Global Product Safety and Quality.

To protect the health of US consumers, the FDA needs to modify the way it conducts business and to act globally, the report reads. This new approach includes four main elements:

- The FDA needs to team up with counterparts worldwide to create international coalitions of regulators charged with improving and guaranteeing product quality and safety.
- These coalitions need to develop international information systems and networks and boost their sharing of data and regulatory resources.
- The FDA must improve its information gathering and analysis capabilities, with an increased emphasis on risk analysis.
- There will be increased FDA co-operation with industry and public and private groups, and the agency will allocate its resources based on risk.

The FDA said it is also expanding its food-safety efforts under the FDA Food Safety Modernisation Act (FSMA). There will be new inspection mandates, including one to inspect more than 19 000 foreign food facilities by the year 2016.

Source: INFOFISH *International*, 5/2011.

PUBLICATIONS

IOC: Harmful microalgae

A new manual for field sampling and monitoring of harmful microalgae is available from the IOC in cooperation with IAEA: "***IOC Manuals and Guides, no. 59.: Guía para el diseño y puesta en marcha de un plan de seguimiento de microalgas productoras de toxinas*".** The document was prepared by B. Reguera, R. Alonso, A. Moreira, A. and S Méndez, IOC of UNESCO and IAEA, Paris and Viena, 2011. The manual is published in Spanish only, being directed to Latin American and Caribbean scientists. It can be downloaded as a pdf-file here http://www.ioc-unesco.org/hab/index.php?option=com_oe&task=viewDocumentRecord&docID=8124

FAO: Seafood risk assessment modelling

FAO Fisheries Technical Paper 462 is titled "***A primer on risk assessment modeling: focus on seafood products***" and prepared by Dr. Aamir M. Fazil, Public Health Agency of Canada, Ottawa, Canada. This Technical Paper is written as an introduction to the concepts of microbial risk assessment in general, but with a seafood focus and a greater emphasis on the quantitative approach. The document is written at a level to provide utility for different groups of people. It can serve as a guide for individuals in the field starting out in risk assessment, who may be in search of an illustrative and applied text. It is also suitable for risk managers who are not involved directly in creating risk assessments, but who need to have an awareness and appreciation of the details and potential applications of microbial risk assessment. The content and layout of the document is a result of the many presentations, workshops and training courses that the author and his colleagues have

conducted to a wide variety of audiences, and responds to the need for a basic and very illustrative text to accompany these sessions. The document may be downloaded from the FAO site www.fao.org

The next issue of THE FISH INSPECTOR will be distributed in April 2012. Please forward any information you may wish to have disseminated through this newsletter to: Mr C A Lima dos Santos, Rua Cel. Eurico Gomes de Sousa 510 Cob 01, Jardim Oceanico – Barra da Tijuca, 22620-320 Rio de Janeiro, RJ – BRASIL, Tel: +55 21 2491-0704; E-mail: dossantoscarlos@globo.com

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