

# THE FISH INSPECTOR

A Newsletter on Seafood Inspection, Quality Control and Technology



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## GLOBAL

### WSC2023 applauded with the greatest hope

The 12<sup>th</sup> World Seafood Congress 2023 (WSC2023) was held in Peniche, Portugal on 25-27 September, in collaboration with the 13<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Molluscan Shellfish Safety. The event was co-hosted by the International Association of Fish Inspectors (IAFI) and the Instituto Politécnico de Leiria, School of Tourism and Maritime Technologies, Portugal. INFOFISH participated in this global seafood congress as an invited speaker for Day 2, Session III and promoted this congress as the media partner.



This event was attended by more than 150 participants from 30 countries, with top-level interventions by WorldFish, DG SANTÉ, NOAA, Thai Union, UNIDO and FAO, along with a host of excellent academics from universities and research institutes on all five continents. Key themes discussed were technology for the circular economy, emerging food safety hazards in fishery and aquaculture products, safety of bivalve molluscs, impacts of microplastics, traceability tools, fraud in the international supply chain, and ethical drivers including crew welfare, human rights and animal welfare, both in aquaculture and capture fisheries. More than 50 papers and 20 posters presented, many of which we hope will be posted on the IAFI website. The Congress kicked off on 24<sup>th</sup> September with

regional developing country workshops for Asia, Africa and Latin America, with excellent support of FAO and UNIDO and 30 participants also joined the technical tours after the Congress, visiting state-of-the-art fishery and aquaculture operators in the West Region of Portugal, including tuna/sardine cannery, molluscan shellfish hatchery producing for offshore production, and modern fish processing for retail sale. Along with a lively sundowner welcome cocktail at a local surf bar to set the informal tone of the Congress, and the Congress dinner and prize-giving, participants were guaranteed a very full, delightful and intensely stimulating programme.

Participants enjoyed numerous interesting interdisciplinary discussions, both formal and informal. Diversity always thrives at the interface between systems, and the Congress certainly generated plenty of diverse ideas from an exciting mix of disciplines. IAFI will carry these deliberations in the future, as it contemplates its new elevated role as a registered NGO with the UN's Economic and Social Committee.

On closing the event, Dr. Ian Goulding, President of IAFI, announced that the IAFI Board considered several applications for future Congresses and decided to hold WSC2025 in Cochin, India, in collaboration with the Society for Indian Fisheries and Aquaculture and PDA Ventures as congress organiser. This is scheduled to be held at the end of October 2025, so please put a note in your diaries.

### FAO and Cefas jointly published new e-learning course

The FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Division, the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (Cefas, United Kingdom) and the FAO eLearning Academy (FAO-PSU) have announced the publication of the joint certified eLearning course: "[Bivalve Mollusc Sanitation: Growing Area Monitoring](#)" as a global public good, through the FAO eLearning Academy.



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This course forms part of a series of e-learning courses on “Bivalve Mollusc Sanitation” aims to guide practitioners in implementing the Codex Alimentarius guidance and standard in their specific contexts and how to established and monitor a bivalve mollusc growing area. The series consists of the following four e-learning courses:

[1. Bivalve Mollusc Sanitation: Growing Area Risk Profile](#)

The first course in the e-learning series introduces the technical guidance framework for the development of growing areas for bivalve mollusc sanitation programmes. It describes the potential hazards present with live or raw consumption of bivalve molluscs and provides guidance on the completion of a Growing Area Risk Profile (GARP).

[2. Bivalve Mollusc Sanitation: Growing Area Assessment and Review](#)

This second course in the e-learning series details the Growing Area Assessment and review process for establishing a bivalve mollusc growing area sanitation programme. The course provides a framework for data gathering, analysis, assessment and review of potential hazards in the growing area for bivalves intended for human consumption.

[3. Bivalve Mollusc Sanitation: Growing Area Monitoring](#)

This third course in the e-learning series details the Growing Area Monitoring activity in a bivalve mollusc sanitation programme. The course describes sample plans, how to conduct sampling and the and the laboratory analysis of microbial hazards in a growing area for bivalve molluscs intended for human consumption.

[4. Bivalve Mollusc Sanitation: Growing Area Classification and Management](#). Under development.

**IAFI announced the winners of the 2023 IAFI Peter Howgate Awardee**

The International Association of Fish Inspectors (IAFI) has announced the winners of the 2023 IAFI Peter Howgate Award. They are Ms Polina Rusanova from Russia and Mr Samuel Koduah from Ghana. Ms Rusanova has background in marine ecology and is a researcher at the Institute for Biological Resources and Marine Biotechnology of the National Research Council of Italy, having completed a joint master's degree in Environmental Management at Irkutsk State University, Russia and Christian-Albrecht University of Kiel, Germany. Her research area concerns the impacts of the environment on seafood safety and quality. In particular she presented a paper on microplastic contamination in elasmobranch fish and its impacts on seafood quality. Mr Koduah works as a Fish Inspector in the Fish Inspection Department of the Ghana Standards Authority, located in Accra. His main duties are as a front-line officer undertaking the food safety inspection and auditing of fishing vessels and fish processing establishments listed for export of fishery products from Ghana. This work involves checking hygiene conditions of the facilities, its staff and HACCP food safety control systems, and the preparation of reports. IAFI sends their warmest congratulations to them both.

**ASIA PACIFIC NEWS**

**Australia: CoOL for seafood in hospitality has started consultation**

The Australian Government is looking to update current country of origin labelling (CoOL) for seafood to include the hospitality sector. Restaurants, cafes and similar businesses would need to provide customers information about where their seafood is from. This change is aimed to help people make choices about the seafood they buy. The Australian Government is working with the seafood and hospitality sectors on a model for seafood CoOL and is now at the final stage of public consultation. These options are outlined in a regulation impact statement (RIS). The feedback will help the government to make a decision about seafood labelling in the best interests of industry, business and consumers.

Read more [here](#).

**Korea: To launch intense inspection into seafood imports on Fukushima woes**

The country will conduct an "unprecedentedly intense" special inspection into the marking of country of origin for imported seafood products amid concerns over Japan's planned release of contaminated water from its crippled nuclear power plant, the oceans ministry said. The 100-day intensive inspection will begin this month to check if importers, distributors and retailers properly mark the origin of major seafood items coming from overseas, such as scallops, sea bream and sea squirts, Vice Oceans Minister Park Sung-hoon said during a regular briefing on the Fukushima issue. Japan plans to release radioactive water from the Fukushima plant into the sea soon, as the International Atomic Energy Agency said that a two-year review found Tokyo's plan to be consistent with its safety standards. Korea banned all seafood imports from eight Japanese prefectures near Fukushima in 2013 on concerns over their radiation levels in the wake of the meltdown incident in 2011. The Seoul government has said it will not lift the import curbs as the people's safety and health can never be compromised. The planned inspection will mobilize "all personnel available" from the ministry, local governments and the Coast Guard, as well as civic groups and food service associations, and those who violate rules will face strict punishment, Park added. Those who fail to mark the country of origin can face fines up to 10 million won (USD 76 00) and those who forge the mark can face up to seven years in prison or fines up to 100 million won.

Find more news [here](#).

**The Philippines: BFAR warns about PSP and toxic red tide**

The Philippines' Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic

Resources (BFAR) warns all types of shellfish and *Acetes sp.* from Saplan Bay (Ivisan and Sapián in Capiz, Mambuquio and Camanci, Batán (in Aklán); coastal waters of Panay; Pilar; President Roxas; Roxas city in Capiz; coastal waters of Gigantes Islands; Carles in Iloilo; coastal waters of Dauis and Tagbilaran City in Bohol; Dumanquillas Bay in Zamboanga del Sur are NOT FIT for human consumption. They are testing positive for Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP) or within a toxic red tide that is beyond the regulatory limits. Other seafoods including fish, squids, shrimps and crabs require cautionary action by washed thoroughly and removing their internal organs before consumption.

Find the press release [here](#).

## EUROPEAN NEWS

### UK: Further information on the new import controls

The UK authorities have delayed the introduction of their new import control regime (the Border Target Operating Model) by a further 3 months. This means that the new risk-based system of border checks will apply to medium risk seafood from 30 April 2024. On this date, low risk fishery products entering Great Britain will no longer require health certification, and normally will not be subject to border controls. Most wild-caught fish and ambient stable fishery products arriving from the EU, Iceland, Norway and New Zealand have been categorised as low risk. Aquaculture products, bivalve molluscs, fish associated with histamine, and chilled and frozen processed seafoods have been categorised as medium risk. Consignments of medium risk products will require export health certification and will be checked at a frequency of between 1% and 30%.

Find more information [here](#).

### 29 rapid alert notifications for fishery products

There were 29 rapid alert notifications for fishery products in July 2023 with 2 notifications for bivalve mollusc products, 4 for cephalopod products, 5 for crustacean products, 18 for other fishery products and no rapid alert notifications for gastropod products. These included 2 consignments of chilled shortfin squid from Spain, 2 consignments of shrimp from the Netherlands, 2 consignments of shrimp from Ecuador and 3 consignments of sardine from Morocco.

**Source:** Megapesca Lda Fishfiles Service  
[www.megapesca.com](http://www.megapesca.com)

### 2023 World Antimicrobial Resistance Congress: Trends in *Aeromonas spp* in seafood samples and antibiotic susceptibility

A poster presentation at the 2023 World Antimicrobial Resistance Congress entitled "Identification and

antibiotic susceptibility profiling of *Aeromonas spp* in seafood samples along the food chain in Singapore" addressed *Aeromonas spp* as a foodborne pathogen in meat, fresh vegetables, drinking water, and fish and shellfish in seafood-related outbreaks. In recent years, antibiotic overuse in aquaculture for prevention and treatment of bacterial diseases has caused a spike in antimicrobial resistance (AMR). As part of Singapore's National Strategic Action Plan towards AMR while incorporating a One Health approach, the AMR surveillance program looked at the prevalence of *Aeromonas spp* from 1 343 seafood samples since August 2021. According to the research, 69% (n=136/197) were *Aeromonas hydrophila/caviae* and 23% (n=46/197) were *Aeromonas sobria*. The highest prevalence of *Aeromonas spp* was found in fish (53% n=104/197) and oysters (26% n=52/197). A lower prevalence was found in prawn and mussel (6% n=12/197), feed (4% n=7/197) with scallop, clam, squid, and cockle as (5% n=10/197). It was noted that oysters are often eaten raw and have a possibly higher risk of foodborne illness. Thus, antimicrobial profiles and genome analysis were performed on 30 *Aeromonas spp* isolates from oyster samples to delve more into AMR implications in aquatic environments and public health. The tested samples were found to be susceptible to cefotaxime (97%), ciprofloxacin (97%), chloramphenicol (94%), and tetracycline (87%). All samples were susceptible to ceftazidime, egnetamicin, and meropenem, and didn't experience multi-drug resistance. These isolates have shown limited resistance to the antibiotics panel tested and various *Aeromonas spp* clusters were identified in Whole Genome Sequencing. These findings have spotlighted the occurrences of *Aeromonas spp* in seafood samples and provided information on their AMR profiles to help inform the public on consumption warnings.

Read the full article [here](#).

## LATIN AMERICAN NEWS

### Ecuador: FDA signs partnership to enhance safety of shrimp imports

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has signed a Regulatory Partnership Arrangement (RPA) with Ecuador's seafood regulatory authority to strengthen food safety in shrimp intended for the U.S. market. Shrimp is the most consumed seafood in the United States, the vast majority of which is imported. Ecuador is one of the leading exporters of aquacultured shrimp to the United States. The first of its kind, this regulatory partnership serves as an arrangement between the FDA and the Vice Ministry of Aquaculture and Fisheries (VMAF) to work more closely to reinforce food safety practices along the entire supply chain. Such arrangements aim to leverage commodity-specific oversight systems in this case, involving imported aquacultured shrimp along with data and information, to strengthen food safety before and at the port of entry. In preparing for

the RPA with Ecuador, in August 2022, the FDA and VMAF signed a confidentiality commitment (CC) that allows for the exchange of confidential information, including inspection records, sample findings, and other non-public documents. In addition, the FDA did a rigorous assessment of the strength of Ecuador's aquacultured seafood safety system and examined important parts of VMAF's programs and capabilities.

Read more [here](#).

## NORTH AMERICAN NEWS

### FDA Publishes Updated Seafood List Guidance for Industry

The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has published updates to The Seafood List—FDA's Guide to Determine Acceptable Seafood Names: Guidance for Industry. The principles of the guidance document have not changed from the previous version; FDA updated the guidance for ease of understanding and to modify or add examples of acceptable seafood names. The guidance is intended to advise industry about what FDA considers to be acceptable market and common names for seafood sold in the U.S. and to help manufacturers in labeling seafood products. The guidance provides more information on the acceptable market name, common name, scientific name, and vernacular name of seafood species sold in the U.S. The names are listed in FDA's Seafood List. The most significant change is the addition of "Kanpachi (Ocean-Farmed)" as an acceptable market name for Amberjack (*Seriola rivoliana*) which was required by Section 774 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Public Law 117-328). FDA published the addition of "Kanpachi (Ocean-Farmed)" in The Seafood List in July 2023.

Find more information [here](#).

## AFRICAN NEWS

### East African states agree on actions to strengthen food safety in the region

Policy and decision makers on food safety and Codex activities of the East African Community (EAC) held a meeting on 1 September, hosted by the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS), which also serves as the national Codex Contact Point in Uganda, resolving to implement 11 actions to improve food safety control and Codex related systems in the region. The

high-level participants from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, South Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda also adopted four policy briefs providing recommendations on mitigating the impact of current food safety issues. These five countries are participating in a FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund group project under the EAC Codex Forum. Furthermore, the meeting called for the implementation of recommendations presented in the four policy briefs. These cover various aspects of food safety and Codex systems in the EAC region including a general perspective on food safety and the Codex situation in the EAC, the impact of pesticides and veterinary drugs in food, the use of food additives, and a focus on food contaminants.

Read more [here](#).

## PUBLICATIONS

FAO, IOC and IAEA. 2023. Joint technical guidance for the implementation of early warning systems for harmful algal blooms. Fisheries and Aquaculture Technical Paper No. 690. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc4794en>



This technical publication will guide competent authorities and relevant institutions involved in consumer protection or environmental monitoring to implement early warning systems for HABs present in their areas (marine and brackish waters), specifically those affecting food safety or food security (benthic HABs, fish-killing HABs, pelagic

toxic HABs, and cyanobacteria HABs). The guidance provides a roadmap for stakeholders on how to improve or implement an EWS for HABs and biotoxins, where appropriate. It is important to note that not all countries and institutions can implement the same level of EWS for HABs, and this guidance is intended mainly for those who seek to broaden existing early warning systems, or who are just beginning to consider putting a system in place.

Download this technical publication [here](#).

The next issue of THE FISH INSPECTOR will be distributed in January 2024. Any information you may wish to have disseminated through this newsletter may be submitted through <http://e-newsletter.infofish.org/>

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