



WORKING GROUP 3 – EU CONTROL AND SANITARY ISSUES, CONSUMER RULES

Benoît Thomassen

Chair

Copa Cogeca (Meeting Room A), Rue de Trèves 61, 1040 Brussels

Thursday, 30 January 2025

AGENDA (CET TIME ZONE)

- 09:00 Welcome from the Chair, Benoît Thomassen
- 09:05 Adoption of the agenda and of the last meeting's minutes (18.09.24)
- 09:10 Actions points
- 09:15 Consumer Information
- 09:45 Hygiene and Sanitary Issues
- 10:30 Common Market Organisation
- 11:00 **Break**
- 11:15 Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation
- 12:20 AOB
- 12:25 Summary of actions points
- 12:30 End of the meeting*

ACTION POINTS (18 SEPTEMBER 2024)

Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation:

- Secretariat to launch a one-month consultation for members to share their views on the impacts of package reuse targets, so that draft advice can potentially be considered at January 2025 meeting
- Request for feedback from 27 September to 25 October 2024
- Draft advice circulated on 5 November 2024

Consumer Information:

- Draft advice on “consumer information on fishery and aquaculture products, particularly in the context of the HoReCa sector” to be put forward to the Executive Committee for consideration and potential approval.
- Advice adopted on 23 October 2024
- Letter of reply from DG MARE on 20 December 2024

CONSUMER INFORMATION

➤ Presentation of the report “Fishy labels: What do we know about the seafood we buy in supermarkets?”, of the “Follow the Fish” movement, and of a recent poll on consumer information

- Vanya Vulperhorst (Oceana)

➤ Exchange of views



Introduction

The European Union (EU) is one of the three largest seafood markets in the world. With imports representing 70% of all seafood consumed in the EU, it has one of the strongest legal frameworks globally to prevent illegally caught seafood from entering its market. Traceability requirements for fresh, frozen and smoked seafood products within the EU are also very strong, requiring key information such as species name, origin, catching method and production method to be passed along the supply chain all the way to consumers.

In contrast to fresh seafood, traceability requirements for processed products like canned tuna and fish fingers remain weak. This is a significant problem, as these products are very popular in the EU. For example, in 2021, 93% of French households bought canned seafood products.¹ Processed seafood represents 22% of fishery and aquaculture products consumed in the EU.² According to a 2021 Eurobarometer survey on consumption habits, nearly one third of respondents eat tinned fishery and aquaculture products once or twice per month.³ Certain popular processed products, particularly shrimps, prawns, and tuna, are of particular concern for traceability, because they have a higher risk of being associated with illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing or human rights violations.⁴



Labels on fresh and frozen fish and aquaculture products must indicate the species (including the scientific name), catch location, and fishing gear, while processed seafood such as canned tuna, canned sardines, and surimi are exempt from these requirements.



This means that consumers do not have basic information about their seafood, such as which species they are eating. For example, a canned product might simply be labelled “tuna”, which could refer to any of 14 different tuna species, including overfished stocks. Additionally, there is no labelling requirement for information on the origin of the product, which prevents consumers from being able to choose to avoid certain regions for political, environmental, or human rights concerns. Similarly, information about fishing gear, especially if sufficiently precise, can inform consumers about associated environmental impacts, such as the risk of seabed damage or bycatch of protected species like turtles or cetaceans, or of juvenile fishes.

Seafood supply chains are complex and often span multiple continents before reaching consumers. In addition, seafood products are the most globally traded animal protein in terms of trade value.⁵

HYGIENE AND SANITARY ISSUES

- Update on the upcoming legislation on the maximum levels of inorganic arsenic in certain foodstuffs
 - Veerle Vanheusden (DG SANTE E2)
- Exchange of views on the maximum levels of mercury in canned tuna products
 - Veerle Vanheusden (DG SANTE E2)
- Way forward

COMMON MARKET ORGANISATION

- Presentation on the section on consumer information requirements of the ongoing study on the Common Market Organisation commissioned by DG MARE
 - Séverine Renault (AND International)
- Exchange of views
- Way forward

BREAK

➤ **BACK AT 11:15**

PACKAGING AND PACKAGING WASTE REGULATION

- **Presentation of the new legislation**
 - **DG ENV B₃ (TBC)**

- **Presentation of the “Re-thinking Fish Boxes” project**
 - **Stefania Campogianni (WWF)**

- **Consideration of the draft advice on “Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation: Impacts of the package reuse targets for the EU, fisheries, aquaculture and fish processing industries”**

- **Way forward**

AOB, ACTION POINTS, END OF MEETING

- **AOB**
- **Summary of action points**
- **End of meeting**