

# THE FISH INSPECTOR

A Newsletter on Seafood Inspection, Quality Control and Technology



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GLOBAL

## World Seafood Congress rescheduled



The International Association of Fish Inspectors – IAFI has rescheduled the World Seafood Congress 2026 (WSC 2026) in 9 -11 February 2026. Thus, the new deadline for submission of abstracts is 30 September 2025. The 13th WSC, themed Sustainable Solutions for Inclusive Growth – Building Resilient Aquatic Food Supply Chains, will be held at the Chennai Trade Centre, India and it will provide a platform for in-depth discussions on the future of seafood sector, to foster awareness and promote best practices in processing and distribution technologies. WSC 2026 will be an exciting and stimulating line-up of top presenters setting out the latest trends, challenges and developments in the global seafood trade. More information is available at [World Seafood Congress 2026](https://www.wsc2026.com).

## Study finds microplastic contamination in 99% of seafood samples

[Microplastics](#) contamination is widespread in seafood sampled in a recent study, adding to growing evidence of the dangerous substances' ubiquity in the nation's food system, and a growing threat to human health. The [peer-reviewed study](#) detected microplastics in 99%, or 180 out of 182, samples of seafood either bought at the store or obtained from a fishing boat in Oregon. Researchers also determined that the most common type of microplastic were fibers from clothing or textiles, which represented over 80% of the substance they detected. The findings highlight a serious problem with plastic use at its current scale, said Elise Granek, a Portland State University microplastics researcher and study co-author. The study sampled five types of fin fish and pink shrimp, and found microplastics can

travel from gills or mouths to meat that humans eat. Granek said researchers suspect the high levels in shrimp and herring are likely to owe to them feeding on plankton on the surface of the water. The plankton often accumulates in ocean fronts and moves in tides in the same way as microplastics, Granek said. Young lamprey that feed around the riverbed also show higher levels, but the levels dropped in older lamprey that move into the ocean. Chinook salmon showed the lowest levels, though it was not a fully apples to apples comparison researchers only looked at filets, which are largely what humans eat, and checked the entire body of the smaller fish and shrimp. Granek said on an individual level, washing machines are a major source of pollution, so people can wash clothes less, wash with cold water, and try to avoid synthetic fabrics and fast fashion. Ultimately, the solution needs to come at a policy level and plastic use needs to be reduced, and filters that catch microplastics should be required on washing machines.

Read more: [here](#).

## How AI can transform the seafood industry

Artificial intelligence (AI) can help the seafood industry become more predictable and profitable. An interesting article contributed by Eric Enno Tamm and published in the INFOFISH International Issue 4/2024 explains three types of AI: machine learning, computer vision and generative AI; moving on to how AI is currently being deployed in seafood supply chains, from computer vision onboard fishing vessels to automated inspection and demand forecasting in supply chains. It then explores research in how AI can be used in the seafood processing sector including yield prediction, drain weight prediction for tuna canneries, rapid salinity testing, automated visual inspection with smart cameras, anomaly detection and demand forecasting. The article concludes that there are many opportunities to deploy AI to optimise and automate processes in order to improve the profitability and sustainability of the seafood processing sector.

Read the full article: [here](#).



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## ASIA PACIFIC NEWS

### Australia: SIA welcomes progress on Country-of-Origin- Labelling

Seafood Industry Australia (SIA) welcomes the announcement from the Albanese Government on the continued progress on mandatory Country-of-Origin Labelling (CoOL) for seafood in food service, with implementation set to begin on 1 July 2025. "This announcement marks a significant milestone in ensuring Australian consumers have the information they need to make informed choices when dining out," said SIA CEO Veronica Papacosta. "CoOL is a win for both consumers and industry, empowering people to choose Australian seafood when they want to." "Despite Australia having the world's third-largest Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), a staggering 64% of the seafood we consume is imported. This highlights the importance of clear labelling so consumers can make informed choices," said Veronica Papacosta. Under the new regulations, restaurants, cafes, takeaways, pubs, and clubs will be required to indicate the origin of their seafood using the Australian-Imported-Mixed (AIM) model: **A** (Australian), **I** (Imported or international) and **M** (Mixed origin containing both Australian and imported seafood).

Read more: [here](#).

### Cambodia: Strengthening standards of fisheries products

The country's agriculture and fisheries sectors are moving forward thanks to a raft of initiatives, including introducing technologies such as the CamTrace system, to boost production and drive market demand both locally and internationally. "CamTrace is defined as a cutting-edge digital traceability tool developed under the EU-funded CAPFISH-Capture project jointly implemented by UNIDO and the Fisheries Administration (FiA)". "The system provides real-time tracking of products from the origin to the end consumer. CamTrace is designed to meet global standards and empower Cambodian exporters." During the Investment Support Facility (ISF) Award and Launching of Digital Tools for Cambodia Fisheries Sector event, attendees heard that the new system would enable enterprises to export their fish and fishery products while allowing consumers to verify product origins. Currently, eight enterprises are adopting the system. As more export-oriented enterprises follow suit, it will facilitate the export of safe, high-quality fish and fishery products. About 23 post-harvest fishery enterprises were awarded and for provided support through the project's ISF and Value Chain Investment Support (VCIS) scheme. More than half of the event's attendees were women-led enterprises. The CamTrace digital traceability system, an innovative platform developed under the CAPFISH Project."

Read more: [here](#).

### Malaysia: Bacterial levels in cockles exceed safety standards

An analysis of samples from cockles washed ashore at Pantai Sura in Dungun, Terengganu, Malaysia has shown that the levels of faecal coliform bacteria and *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) exceed the set standards. Terengganu Fisheries Department Director (TFDD) said the analysis by the Kuantan Fisheries Biosecurity Laboratory in Pahang showed that cockle samples collected had faecal coliform levels exceeding 300 MPN/100g and *E. coli* levels surpassing 230 MPN/100g. "In conclusion, the analysis of washed-up cockles in 2014, 2016, 2019, 2021, and the latest in 2025 show that faecal coliform and *E. coli* levels in the samples exceed the set standards. "Cockles in this category are classified as Class B and C under the National Shellfish Sanitation Programme (NSSP) standards and must be fully cooked prior to consumption," he said in a statement recently. The TFDD advised the public to ensure that any collected cockle was properly cooked before consumption to reduce the risk of bacterial contamination. He said that the consumption of raw cockles should be avoided, especially for individuals with weakened immune systems. He also advised the public to always practice proper hygiene when handling seafood to ensure food safety.

Read more: [here](#).

### Singapore: SFA updates industry guidance on safety assessment of novel foods

The Singapore Food Agency (SFA) recently published an updated [guidance document for industry](#) on the requirements for the safety assessment of novel foods and novel food ingredients. Businesses are encouraged to refer to the guidance document prior to submitting a novel food application to SFA. SFA's criteria for "novel food" includes any substance that has not been used to a significant degree within the last 20 years; has been manufactured, prepared, or preserved by a process that has not been previously used within the last 20 years; consists of, or is isolated or produced from, material of mineral origin that has not been used within the last 20 years; or a food that contains or consists of engineered nanomaterials. Under SFA's definition, novel food does not include [foods containing insect ingredients](#). Businesses that intend to produce, manufacture, import, distribute and/or sell novel food or food products containing novel food ingredients in Singapore are required to ensure that the novel food or novel food [ingredients](#): 1) Have received premarket approval from SFA, 2) Meet the specifications and are produced in accordance with the manufacturing process declared in the safety assessment submitted to SFA and 3) Are only used in the food categories and/or products specified in SFA's premarket approval, and in accordance with the proposed use levels for each food category and/or products described.

Read more: [here](#).

## EUROPEAN NEWS

### EU restrictions relating to antimicrobial medicinal products

The European Union is restricting the use of antimicrobial products in farming, with a focus on 1) antimicrobial medical products used to promote growth or increase the yield of animals, and 2) antimicrobials reserved for treating certain infections in humans. While most of the restrictions apply to EU member states, some requirements affect countries outside the EU if they export products of animal origin, including aquaculture products, to the EU. In 2023 the European Commission contacted the competent authorities in all the affected exporting countries and asked them to provide “guarantees of compliance” with the requirements for the use of antimicrobial products. The Commission then evaluated the responses and drew up a list of 76 exporting countries that had provided satisfactory guarantees of compliance. The list was published in Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/2598. According to that Regulation, from 3 September 2026, products of animal origin will be allowed into the EU only if they originate in countries that appear on the list. While most countries that currently export aquaculture product to the EU appear on the list, the following countries are absent: Armenia, Brunei, Belize, Indonesia, India, Iran, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Panama, Serbia, Switzerland, Tunisia, Tanzania and Uruguay. The intention is for the European Commission to publish an updated list before 3 September 2026. Exporting countries that have not yet done so will need to provide the Commission with satisfactory guarantees in time to appear on the new list if they are to continue to export aquaculture product to the EU.

Find the full article: [here](#).

### EU: 56 rapid alert notifications for fishery products

There were 56 rapid alerts notifications for fishery products in March 2025 with 23 rapid alert notifications for bivalve mollusc products, 3 for cephalopod products, 6 for crustacean products, 26 for other fishery products and no rapid alert notifications for gastropod products. These included 10 consignments of oysters from France, 3 consignments of oysters from the Netherlands and 6 consignments of salmon from Chile. Norovirus is an emerging problem for several EU Member States.

**Source:** Megapesca Lda Fish Files Lite Newsletter, March 2025, [www.megapesca.com](http://www.megapesca.com)

### EU Listeria testing labs checked for accuracy

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control published the results of the tenth round of the external quality assessment (EQA-10) scheme for *Listeria monocytogenes* serotyping. The survey

included 18 reference laboratories and found that overall serogrouping was performed with 95% correct results.

**Source:** Megapesca Lda Fish Files Lite Newsletter, March 2025, [www.megapesca.com](http://www.megapesca.com)

## NORTH AMERICAN NEWS

### USA: Mississippi Senator introduces ‘Safer Shrimp Imports Act’

A U.S. Senator from Mississippi, introduced legislation she believes will ensure the quality of imported shrimp. The Safer Shrimp Imports Act would require overseas shrimp facility inspections and foreign countries wishing to export shrimp to the United States to meet food safety inspection standards equivalent to those of U.S. shrimp producers. It would also require regular reporting by the FDA to Congress. “The FDA has been lackadaisical about seafood inspection for far too long, contributing to a silent public health crisis in America,” said by the senator. The Republican senator said the legislation is important because 90% of Americans’ shrimp consumption comes from foreign sources. [Senate Bill 667](#) would give people confidence that the imported shrimp they’re eating isn’t contaminated, according to the senator. The [American Shrimp Processors Association](#) is supporting the Safer Shrimp Imports Act.

Read more: [here](#).

### USFDA: Adds firms to import alert due to PFAS in clams

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) has added eight firms to FDA [Import Alert 99-48](#), Detention without Physical Examination of Foods Due to Chemical Contamination, to prevent future entry of shipments into the U.S. of processed clams due to contamination with [per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances](#) (PFAS). The FDA detected elevated levels of PFAS, notably perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), in samples of clams from the firms, resulting in the products being subject to refusal of admission to the U.S. market under the [Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act](#). As the FDA continues to update and enhance our approach and process for evaluating and monitoring chemicals, adding firms to an import alert is part of our commitment to reducing harmful exposure to chemical contaminants like PFAS in the food supply. The firms are the first to be added to Import Alert 99-48 and are manufacturers or processors of clams with China listed as the country of origin. Those firms include Donggang Hongxing Food Co., Ltd; Donggang Yixing Food Co., Ltd; Donggang City Tianhong Aquatic Foodstuff Co., Ltd; Dandong Zhengrun Food Co., Ltd; Nantong Changhua Aquatic Food Co., Ltd; Liaoning Baichen Food Co., Ltd; Dandong Jiamei Food Co., Ltd; and Donggang City Gangzhu Foodstuff Co., Ltd.

Read more: [here](#).

## LATIN AMERICAN NEWS

### Cuba: DG SANTÉ validated the remote assessment of sanitary controls on fishery product exports

DG SANTÉ published a report of a remote assessment to verify the capability of the Cuban competent authority to ensure that consignments of fishery products exported to the European Union comply with the applicable EU requirements. The assessment found that Cuba has the necessary legal framework, and a competent authority with sufficient resources and legal powers. However, shortcomings were identified in several areas which weakens the reliability of the health attestations made in the EU export certificate for fishery products. Monitoring arrangements for perfluoroalkyl substances are not in place and the planned monitoring for contaminants, residues parasites, and organoleptic examinations is not implemented as planned. The report makes recommendations to the Cuba competent authority, the National Centre for Animal Health (NCAH) to address the identified shortcomings.

**Source:** Megapesca Lda Fish Files Lite Newsletter, March 2025, [www.megapesca.com](http://www.megapesca.com)

## AFRICAN NEWS

### CCAFRICA25: Agrees to actions for furthering food safety and standards in the region

The 25th session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for Africa (CCAFRICA25) has concluded, following in-depth discussions on topics of regional concern and on new work proposals, and with the nomination of the Gambia as the new Regional Coordinator. “I think we have been very accommodating to each other, to ensure we have been able to work swiftly through this session, to have documents that will be proceeding to the next stages,” said the Chairperson, upon adoption of the meeting report. Topics of regional concern were outlined by the representatives for WHO, on behalf of FAO and WHO, and the African Union (AU). CCAFRICA25 discussed two new work proposals, each of them prepared by Senegal, one for a standard for *kethiakh*, which is braised or boiled dried fish, and one for *tiacry*, a regional commodity of precooked cereal vegetable granules. There were extensive discussions on the subject, and the Codex Secretariat gave advice regarding the standards development options, which include developing either an international or a regional

standard, each of which has their own implications. The discussions concluded with agreement to start new work on the development of a regional standard for braised or boiled, salted and unsalted, dried fish, and to forward the project document to the 48th session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) for approval. Further work will be done on the proposal for *tiacry*. The agenda also included discussion of the implementation of the current Codex Strategic Plan 2020–2025 and issues relevant to the newly adopted Strategic Plan 2026–2031.

Read more: [here](#).

## PUBLICATIONS

### The Codex Electronic Working Groups Handbook



This handbook is designed for Codex Electronic Working Groups (EWG) participants who are enhancing their engagement in Codex activities or leading committee-level efforts for the first time. It offers clear, practical guidance with tips and advice for establishing, managing, participating in, and reporting on EWGs. These working groups have become a widely used tool for advancing work between meetings of Codex Alimentarius Commission subsidiary bodies. They allow Codex Members and Observer Organizations, whose representatives may not attend meetings, to follow and contribute to specific work items. While the Codex Procedural Manual outlines general EWG guidelines, it does not cover insights gained from hands-on experience or new technologies that support EWGs. This handbook draws on contributions from both experienced and new EWG chairs, Codex committee leaders, and Codex Secretariat officers. It clarifies participant roles and responsibilities and explains how to effectively lead and participate in Codex standard-setting work through EWGs.

Download this complimentary publication: [here](#).

The next issue of THE FISH INSPECTOR will be distributed in July 2025. Any information you may wish to have disseminated through this newsletter may be submitted through <http://e-newsletter.infofish.org> or

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