

THE FISH INSPECTOR

A Newsletter on Seafood Inspection, Quality Control and Technology



Number 142

January 2026

GLOBAL

WSC 2026 announced the line of keynote speakers



Themed **'Sustainable Solutions for Inclusive Growth-Building safer, fair and resilient global seafood trade'**, WSC 2026 organisers announced the keynote speakers including Mr. Andrey Sawchenko, International Justice Mission, Mr. Ansen Ward, FAO, Rome, Ms. Clare Winkel, Integrity Compliance Solutions, Ms. Esther Garrido Gamarro, FAO, Rome, Mr. Iddya Karunasagar, FAO, Mr. Ivan Bartolo, Seafood Importers and Processors Alliance, Ms. Jovice Mkuchu, Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, Government of Tanzania, Mr. Kevin S. Edwards, Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability, Mr. Marcelo Hidalgo, Fishing Industry Association in Papua New Guinea, Ms. Melanie Siggs, Global Seafood Alliance, Mr. Nigel Edwards, Seafood Industry Development Director Hilton Foods, UK and Ms. Sophie Arinda, Digital Food Safety and Trade Services Limited. Sessions cover everything from the future of global trade, ethical labour and standards, seafood hazards, compliance, and processing technologies through to the growth industry of seaweed, traceability and a number of expert panels.

The WSC 2026 is jointly organised by IAFI and PDA Ventures, and co-organised by the Government of India, represented by the Department of Fisheries, the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, the Ministry of Earth Sciences, and NITI Aayog. Join us and register for WSC 2026: [here](#).

IAFI announced the winners of the 2026 IAFI Peter Howgate Awardees

International Association of Fish Inspectors (IAFI) is

delighted and honored to announce the winners of the **2026 IAFI Peter Howgate Award**. They are two young fish technologists, Ms Harini Ravi from India (right) and Ms Riza Jane Banicod (left) from the Republic of Philippines. Harini has background as a Fisheries technologist and engineering and is currently undertaking a PhD at the National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MOFPI). At present, she is engaged in research on the life-cycle assessment of fish processing operations and cold-chain logistics in India, focusing on identifying environmental hotspots and proposing strategies to build energy-efficient, low-impact and more sustainable fish processing and distribution systems. Riza Jane is a Senior Researcher at the Fisheries Postharvest Research and Development Division of the Department of Agriculture, National Fisheries Research and Development Institute (DA-NFRDI) in the Philippines. She earned her master's degree in Fisheries Science from Pukyong National University in Busan, South Korea, and her field of specialisation is postharvest fisheries and marketing, with particular focus on postharvest losses and waste reduction, seafood safety, product standardisation, and value chain development. Her current research centers on developing new technologies to foster climate-resilient and sustainable fisheries value chains in the Philippines. She has led and contributed to several pioneering national projects, notably on fisheries postharvest loss assessment and the development of the Philippine salt industry. IAFI sends the warmest congratulations to them both and looking forward to meeting them and hearing them present their works at the World Seafood Congress in Chennai, February 2026.



Photo: Ms Riza Jane Banicod, the Philippines and Ms Harini Ravi, India. Credit & Source: IAFI



1st Floor, Wisma LKIM, Jalan Desaria, Pulau Meranti, 47120 Puchong, Selangor, Malaysia
(P.O. Box 10899, 50728 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)

Tel: (603) 8066 8112 • Fax: (603) 8060 3697 • E-mail: info@infofish.org
Website: www.infofish.org



ASIA PACIFIC NEWS

Australia: New Sydney Fish Market opened

After years of planning, budget blowouts and project delays, Sydney's new AUD 800 million fish market opened on 10th January 2026. Touted as the most significant harbour side build since the iconic Opera House, the new centre is expected to double the market's annual visitor numbers to 6 million. Blackwattle Bay in Pyrmont has been home to Sydney Fish Market since 1966, with the centre the biggest of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. The new Sydney Fish Market is 20% bigger than its predecessor with extended visiting hours up to 10pm. About 40 retailers will be based at the facility, including all the old market's tenants and more than 20 new businesses. For businesses, the new centre includes dedicated wharves where commercial fishing boats can unload their catch directly into the market. Wholesale and auction facilities have been given a face-lift, and large-scale ice-making and crate-washing infrastructure has been installed to boost business efficiency. Read more: [here](#).

Australia: Launches Innovative Vessel Food Safety and Handling Training App



Photo: Ms Meaghan, Director at ClearCut Seafood Training, QLD.

Queensland has introduced a new training app designed to strengthen food safety and handling practices across the Australian commercial wild catch sector. Developed by ClearCut Seafood Training in collaboration with the Queensland Seafood Industry Association (QSIA) and supported by Queensland Government funding, the program provides vessel owners, skippers and crew with structured, competency based guidance on safe seafood handling. Two versions are currently available: one for crew and another for skippers and management, with translations in Tagalog and Bahasa Indonesian to be released soon. The training covers key areas including food safety hazards, product risk levels, contamination control, good manufacturing practices, temperature and storage management, relevant legal obligations and operational problem solving. It is intended for use in a range of workplace contexts, from onboarding new personnel to maintaining the skills of experienced crew. The program is delivered via a self paced mobile app that operates both online and offline, enabling us to be used in remote or offshore environments. While presently aligned with Australian

regulations and industry requirements, the material can be adapted to accommodate region specific legislation, accreditation frameworks, customer standards and species specific considerations. For further information: [here](#) or Contact: team@clearcutseafoodtraining.com

India: 106% growth in fisheries production in the last decade

Fish production has increased to 19.76 million tonnes in FY 2024-25 from 9.58 million tonnes in FY 2013-14 achieving a significant 106% growth. Under various schemes and programs implemented from 2014-15 by the Department of Fisheries, Government of India, 7.47 million employment opportunities (both direct and indirect) have been generated. Find the press release: [here](#).

Malaysia: Seizes non-compliant seafood

The Malaysian Border Control and Protection Agency (AKPS) recently seized seafood and vegetable shipments valued at USD 15461.73 (RM 62804) for failing to meet import requirements. The seizure at the Bukit Kayu Hitam border included undeclared giant freshwater prawns and oyster meat, as well as items lacking mandatory 3P certification (Grading, Packaging, and Labelling). The case is currently under investigation by MAQIS for violations of the Malaysian Quarantine and Inspection Services Act 2011. Read the full report: [here](#).

Pakistan: Seafood processing, export zone will be set up as an investment of USD 60-80 million

Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry announced that the country setting up of a 100-acre seafood processing and export zone at Korangi Fisheries Harbour Authority (KoHFA), with an estimated investment of USD 60-80 million. The project will shift Pakistan's seafood industry from raw exports to high-value processed products to position the country in Gulf, East African and Asian markets. Read more: [here](#).

EUROPEAN NEWS

Europêche welcomes new EU Freezing-in-Brine regulation

Association of National Organisations of Fishing Enterprises in the European Union, **Europêche**, welcomes new EU freezing-in-brine regulation as a major step for consumer safety and fair competition for EU fishing sector. The organisation cheers the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2025/1444^[1] setting strict brine-freezing conditions for tuna purse seiners. For once, European regulation rightly recognises and values the high sanitary and technological standards already applied by the European tropical tuna purse seine fleet, that only responsible

operators can meet. It's a major step for consumer safety and fair competition for EU fishing sector. Read more: [here](#).

EU: European Commission releases 2026 audit schedule

The European Commission's DG SANTE has released its 2026 work programme, significantly increasing its focus on non-EU countries to 51% of total agri-food controls. A major new food safety project targets fish oil for human consumption and includes audits in China, Chile, Oman and Panama, and fact-finding visits to France and Germany. General fishery product control systems will be evaluated through on-site audits in Türkiye, Uruguay and Cambodia. Additionally, seven countries will undergo desk-based audits: Cabo Verde, Malaysia, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Senegal, Solomon Islands and Taiwan. Within the Union, Malta will undergo a dedicated fishery product audit. The live bivalve mollusc sector faces two specific audits in Japan and Vietnam to verify export compliance. Furthermore, residue controls will be audited in 10 non-EU countries including Bangladesh, Republic of Korea, and Tunisia, as well as in three EU Member States (Austria, France and the Netherlands). Controls of residues of pharmacologically active substances, pesticides and contaminants remain a central pillar for 'country listing' and securing EU market access. For further information on the 2026 programme, visit the DG Health and Food Safety website: [here](#).

EU: Reinforce import controls for food safety

On 9th December 2025 the European Commission announced its intention to reinforce its controls on food, animal and plant products entering the EU. According to the Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare, Olivér Várhelyi, the measures are necessary to maintain the highest levels of food safety for EU citizens while ensuring a level playing field for EU producers against global competitors. By strengthening the existing system of official controls, the EU aims to benefit consumers, farmers and businesses. Key measures include a 50% increase in audits of non-EU countries over the next two years and a 33% increase in audits of European Border Control Posts to verify compliance with EU requirements. A dedicated EU Task Force will be established to focus on pesticide residues, animal welfare and food and feed safety. Additionally, the Commission plans to provide training for approximately 500 national authority staff to enhance the efficiency of official controls. The Commission press release is available at the following link: [here](#).

EU: Verification sampling program for seafood exports re-activated

Effective 5 January 2026, the European Union has re-activated its mandatory verification sampling program for EU-listed seafood establishments. Under this

program, the Department of Agriculture (or equivalent national authorities) will conduct independent sampling to verify that export registered establishments are complying with strict EU food safety standards. A key focus of the program is **histamine testing** for scombroid species, such as tuna, mackerel, and kingfish. For these species, the EU requires nine separate samples to be taken from nine different fish to ensure compliance. Participation is mandatory for all establishments wishing to maintain their EU listing, regardless of whether they are currently exporting. Failure to cooperate or participate in the sampling may result in the loss of EU eligibility and removal from the official list of approved exporters. Read the complete industry advisory: [here](#).

New Irish guides on seafood additives

The Irish Sea-Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA) has released two guidance documents regarding the use of additives in the seafood industry. Food Safety Information Notice 07-2025 outlines significant changes to nitrate and nitrite limits that took effect throughout the EU on 9 October 2025. The nitrate/nitrite revisions aim to reduce consumer exposure to nitrosamines while ensuring microbiological safety. Specifically, nitrite additives (E 249–250) are no longer authorised for use in any processed fishery products. Nitrate additives (E 251–252) remain authorised only for pickled herring and sprat, subject to new, reduced limits. Meanwhile, Food Safety Information Notice 12-2025 provides guidance on controlling melanosis (black spot) in crustaceans onboard freezer and factory vessels. Melanosis is an enzymatic reaction occurring approximately three hours after death that causes a blackish coloration on the cuticle. Operators may apply sulphite-based additives or non-sulphite alternatives like 4-hexylresorcinol, provided they follow EU maximum levels and manufacturer instructions. Because sulphites are recognized allergens, they must be emphasised on labels if they exceed 10 mg/kg in the finished product. Both guides stress that additive use must be controlled within a HACCP-based food safety management system. The SFPA's guidance and information notices are available from: [here](#).

NORTH AMERICA NEWS

USA: NFI Welcomes 2025–2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

The National Fisheries Institute (NFI) welcomes the release of the [2025–2030 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), which emphasise the importance of eating more seafood. Seafood is a whole-food source of both key nutrients the new guidelines encourage Americans to prioritise protein and healthy fats, specifically omega-3s. NFI supports the guidelines' user-friendly format, which aims to deliver concise messaging that can help Americans understand the benefits of eating a seafood-rich diet. The new guidelines recommend

early introduction of seafood at six months and ongoing consumption across the lifespan. Seafood is especially important during rapid growth periods like adolescence, pregnancy, and breastfeeding. Seafood naturally fits within the simple, overarching message of the guidelines, “Eat Real Food.” All forms of whole seafood including fresh, frozen, and canned count and work together to make a healthy diet affordable and accessible to American families. While the full range of seafood offerings is too long for health policy makers to list, the new food pyramid graphic features a variety of options including salmon, shrimp, and canned tuna. NFI looks forward to helping Americans put the guidelines into practice and enjoy the health benefits of all types of seafood in their daily diets.

LATIN AMERICA NEWS

Phosphates in seafood: technology, trust, and consumer interest

A newly released scientific paper, “Food-grade phosphates in the Seafood Industry: technological functions, quality, safety, and integrity implications,” Gonçalves & Fernandes (2025) arrives at a pivotal moment for Brazil’s fishing and aquaculture sector and for seafood consumers more broadly. While the subject of phosphates may sound technical, its implications go directly to issues consumers care deeply about: product quality, honest labeling, food safety, and trust in the seafood supply chain. From a Seafood Consumers Association (SCA) perspective, this paper is important because it does not frame phosphates as either “good” or “bad,” but rather as powerful technological tools that must be used transparently, proportionately, and under effective regulatory oversight. Read more: [here](#).

AFRICAN NEWS

Africa: AfFSA to be fully operational by late 2026

The African Union (AU) has moved to fast-track the operationalisation of the Africa Food Safety Agency (AfFSA), which is expected to be fully functional by the end of 2026. As a specialised technical institution, AfFSA’s primary mission is to coordinate and harmonise food safety policies across the continent, directly supporting the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The agency aims to reduce the heavy burden of foodborne diseases in Africa which currently affects over 91 million people annually by strengthening national food control systems and fostering regional

cooperation. A centerpiece of the new agency will be the establishment of a Continental Food Safety Data Hub and an African Rapid Alert System for Food. These tools will allow for real-time notification of food safety incidents and provide centralised risk assessment data to help member states manage emergencies more effectively. While AfFSA will provide the scientific and technical framework for a safer food supply, the AU emphasises that food safety management and law enforcement will remain the responsibility of individual national governments. Read more: [here](#).

PUBLICATION

Edible Seaweed Food Guide



This manual provides a practical guide for preparing seaweed-based foods in China, and it aims to raise global awareness of the nutritional and culinary potential of edible seaweeds. Seaweed is abundant across global marine ecosystems and has been consumed by humans for thousands of years. It includes a wide variety of taxa, such as cyanobacteria, microalgae and macroalgae (commonly referred to as seaweed). Increasingly recognized as a nutritious and sustainable food source, seaweed is rich in proteins, vitamins, unsaturated fatty acids, polysaccharides, dietary fibre and essential minerals. In addition to their nutritional benefits, edible seaweeds offer distinctive sensory attributes, such as an umami taste and a pleasant crunchy texture, which have made them integral to culinary traditions in many coastal communities, particularly in China. The growing interest in sustainable, plant-based and health-promoting foods underscores seaweed’s potential to contribute to global food and nutrition security. Both industrial and household processing methods are described, and each recipe includes information on ingredients, nutritional content and preparation steps. This manual also categorizes seaweed-based products into types such as intermediate products, ready-to-eat items, home-cooked dishes and functional foods. This manual can be downloaded free of charge: [here](#).

The next issue of THE FISH INSPECTOR will be distributed in April 2026. Any information you may wish to have disseminated through this newsletter may be submitted through <http://e-newsletter.infofish.org> or sujit@infofish.org

Editor: Sujit Krishna Das, INFOFISH, Malaysia.

Technical Editing: Omar Riego Penarubia, FAO, Rome, Italy and Meaghan Dodd, IAFI.

Spanish Translation: Gloria Scelza, INFOPESCA, Montevideo, Uruguay.

French Translation: Digré Arriko Calice, INFOPÊCHE, Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire.

Portuguese Translation: Uilians Emerson Ruivo, Ruivo Consultoria, Brazil.