

MODEL CERTIFICATE FOR FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS

CAC/GL 48-2004

INTRODUCTION

Certification is one method that can be utilized by regulatory agencies of importing and exporting countries to compliment the control of their inspection system for fish and fishery products. To help facilitate international trade, the numbers and types of certificates should be limited and could be promoted through international (Codex) model certificates. Notwithstanding, alternatives to the use of official and officially recognized certificates¹ should be considered wherever possible, in particular where the inspection system and requirements of an exporting country are assessed as being equivalent to those of the importing country. The establishment of bilateral or multilateral agreements, such as mutual recognition agreements may provide the logical basis for discontinuing with the issuance of certificates.

SCOPE

The model certificates apply to fish and fishery products presented for international trade that meet food safety, wholesomeness and conformity to food production requirements of the importing country. Animal and plant health matters are not covered. Where administratively and economically feasible, certificates may be issued in an electronic format provided that the relevant authorities of both the importing and exporting country are satisfied with the security of the certification system.

Certificates should adequately describe one or several lots or batches of product's compliance with regulatory requirements based on regular inspections by the inspection service. Additional examinations, analytical results, evaluation of quality assurance procedures or product specifications may also be attested to.

DEFINITIONS

Certification² is the procedure by which official certification bodies or officially recognized certification bodies provide written or equivalent assurance that fish and fishery products or their control systems conform to requirements. Certification of fish and fishery products may be, as appropriate, based on a range of inspection activities which may include continuous on-line inspection, auditing of quality assurance systems, and examination of finished products.

Certifying Bodies are official certification bodies and officially recognized bodies by the competent authority

Certifying officers³: employees of certifying bodies authorized to complete and issue certificates

Inspection² is the examination of fish and fishery products or systems for control of fish and fishery products, raw materials, processing, and distribution including in-process and finished product testing, in order to verify that they conform to requirements.

Inspection system⁴ means official and officially recognized inspection systems.

¹ For the purpose of this document, "certificates" shall mean "official certificates" and "officially recognized certificates"

² *Principles for Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification* (CAC/GL 20-1995)

³ *Guidelines for Generic Official Certificates Formats and the Production and Issuance of Certificates* (CAC/GL 38-2001)

⁴ *Guidelines for the Development of Equivalence Agreements Regarding Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems* (CAC/GL 34-1999)

Official inspection systems and official certification systems² are systems administered by a government agency having jurisdiction empowered to perform a regulatory or enforcement function or both.

Officially recognized inspection systems and officially recognized certification systems² are systems which have been formally approved or recognized by a government agency having jurisdiction.

Official Certificates³ are certificates issued by an official certification body of an exporting country, in accordance with the requirements of the importing or exporting country.

Officially Recognized Certificates³ are certificates issued by an officially recognized certification body of an exporting country, in accordance with the conditions of that recognition and in accordance with the requirements of the importing or exporting country.

Requirements are the criteria set down by the competent authorities relating to trade in fish and fishery products covering the protection of public health, the protection of consumers and conditions of fair trading.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING THE PRODUCTION AND ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATES

- 4.1** It is recommended that the production and issuance of the certificates for fish and fishery products should be carried out in accordance with the principles and appropriate sections of the:
- ❖ Guidelines for Generic Official Certificate Formats and the Production and Issuance of Certificates (CAC/GL 38-2001);
 - ❖ Principles for Food Import and Export Inspection And Certification (CAC/GL 20-1995);
 - ❖ Guidelines for the Design, Operation, Assessment and Accreditation of Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CAC/GL 26-1997);
 - ❖ Guidelines for the Development of Equivalence Agreements Regarding Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CAC/GL 34-1999);
 - ❖ Proposed Draft Revised Code of Ethics for International Trade in Foods (under revision by the CCGP).
- 4.2** The selection of the appropriate language(s) of certificates should be based on adequacy for the importing country's purpose, comprehension by the certifying officer and minimizing unnecessary burden on the exporting country.

THE FORMAT AND USE OF MODEL CERTIFICATES

5.1 FORMAT

5.1.1 Model Sanitary Certificate (ANNEX I) - The format of the model sanitary certificate should be considered when developing a certificate to attest that fish and fishery products contained in a consignment were produced in establishments that are under the control of and produced to the laws and requirements of the exporting country, or under conditions cited in equivalence or compliance agreements.

5.2 USE

Each field of the Model Sanitary Certificate must be filled in or else, marked in a manner that would prevent alteration of the certificate. The Model Certificate should contain and be completed as follows:

- 5.2.1 Identification Number** should be unique for each certificate and should be authorized by the competent authority of the exporting country. Should additional information be required on temporary basis, this may be incorporated as an addendum or an attestation. If there is an addendum, it must have the same identification number as the primary certificate and the signature of the same certifying officer signing the sanitary certificate.
- 5.2.2 Country of Dispatch** for the purposes of the model certificate, designates the name of the country of the competent authority which has the competence to verify and certify the conformity of the production establishments.
- 5.2.3 Competent authority** is the competent official organisation empowered to execute various functions. Its responsibility may include the management of official systems of inspection or certification at the regional or local level.
- 5.2.4 Certifying Bodies** are official certification bodies and bodies officially recognized by the competent authority. .
- 5.2.5 State or type of processing** describes the state in which the fish and fishery product is presented (i.e. fresh, frozen, canned , etc.) and/or the processing methods used (i.e. smoked, breaded, etc.).
- 5.2.6 Type of packaging** could be cartons, boxes, bags, cases, drums, barrels, pallets, etc.
- 5.2.7 Lot identifier / Date code** is the lot identification system developed by a processor to account for their production of fish and fishery product thereby facilitating traceability/product tracing of the product in the event of public health investigations and recalls.
- 5.2.8 Means of transport** should describe the flight/train/truck/container number, as appropriate and the name of the air carrier, vessel, etc.
- 5.2.9 Attestation** is a statement confirming the product or batches of products originate from an establishment that is essentially in good regulatory standing with the Competent Authority in that country and that the products were processed and otherwise handled under a competent HACCP and sanitary programme..

- 5.2.10** Original Certificate should be identifiable and this status should be displayed appropriately with the mark “ORIGINAL” or if a copy is necessary, this certificate should be marked as “COPY” or terms of this effect. The term “REPLACEMENT” is reserved for use on certificates where, for any good and sufficient reason (such as damage to the certificate in transit), a replacement certificate is issued by the certifying officer.
- 5.2.11** Page numbering should be used where the certificate occupies more than one sheet of paper.
- 5.2.12** Seal and signature should be applied in a manner that minimizes the risk of fraud

ANNEX I

**DRAFT MODEL SANITARY CERTIFICATE
COVERING FISH AND FISHERY PRODUCTS**
(At Step 8 of the Procedure)

*(LETTERHEAD or LOGO)*Identification
number: _____

Country of Dispatch:
Competent Authority:
Certifying Body:

I. Details identifying the fishery products

Description of product	Species (scientific name)	State or type of processing	Type of packaging	Lot Identifier/ date code	Number of packages	Net weight
Sum :						

Temperature required during storage and transport: _____ °C

II. Provenance of the fishery products

Address(es) and/or the Registration number(s) of production establishment(s) authorized for exports by competent authority:

Name and address of consignor:

III. Destination of the fishery products

The fishery products are to be dispatched
from:

_____ (Place of dispatch)

to:

_____ (Country and place of destination)

by the following means of
transport:

Name of consignee and address at place of
destination:

IV. Attestation

The undersigned certifying officer hereby certifies that:

- 1) The products described above originate from (an) approved establishment(s) that has been approved by, or otherwise determined to be in good regulatory standing with the competent authority in the exporting country and
- 2) have been handled, prepared or processed, identified, stored and transported under a competent HACCP and sanitary programme consistently implemented and in accordance with the requirements laid down in Codex Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products (CAC/RCP 52-2003)

Done at

on

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_____ (Place)

_____ (Date)

(SEAL)

_____ (Signature of certifying officer)

_____ (Name and official position)

Tel:

Fax:

E-mail: (optional)