Summary of the application: DRIED COFFEE CHERRY of Coffea sp. (Cascara)

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This is an application for notification to place DRIED COFFEE CHERRY (commonly referred to as Cascara), from Coffea sp., on the market in the European Union (EU) for use as an ingredient in a herbal tea/infusion referred to as "Coffee cherry tea", which is prepared by brewing the DRIED COFFEE CHERRY.

This application is submitted pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2015/2283 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015 on novel foods, and specifically corresponds to the category covered in Article 2 (iv) "food consisting of, isolated from or produced from plants or their parts, except when the food has a history of safe food use within the Union and is consisting of, isolated from or produced from a plant or a variety of the same species obtained by traditional propagating practices which have been used for food production within the Union before 15 May 1997."

The application was prepared according to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) guidance on the preparation and presentation of an application for notification of a Traditional Food in the context of Regulation (EU) 2015/2283. Evidence of the consumption of "Coffee cherry tea" in Ethiopia dates back to before the 9th century; "Coffee cherry tea" is indeed commonly used as substitute for coffee in Ethiopia and Yemen. In the scientific literature and in this notification, the term DRIED COFFEE CHERRY refers to the outer part of coffee fruit, the husk and pulp, and accounts for almost 45% of the fresh berry. DRIED COFFEE CHERRY is considered a by-product of the production of coffee beans, as the part of the coffee cherry that remains after the bean is removed.

In the "natural processing method" of coffee production, the drying procedure is carried out during the production of coffee (the whole fruit is dehydrated); while, in the "wet processing method" the skin and pulp of the fresh fruit are separated from the bean and the drying process takes place in a second phase, using the same drying methods as those used for coffee. Both procedures lead to the production of DRIED COFFEE CHERRY: the difference in the two procedures does not affect the definition of the chemical-physical and nutritional characteristics of cascara. DRIED COFFEE CHERRY is traditionally used in some areas where coffee is grown to prepare an infusion that is primarily referred to as "Coffee cherry tea" or "Coffee cherry infusion". The most traditional use is "qishr" (or "kishr"), a tea prepared in Yemen and Ethiopia by infusing DRIED COFFEE CHERRY with spices or various fruits. The same tea is more commonly called "cascara" in Central and South America, where it is traditionally used; in this case the tea is consumed hot or cold. Recent uses of DRIED COFFEE CHERRY are being developed in North America as cold beverages prepared from the hot infusion of the dried husk, mixed with sugar and flavours. As of May 2016, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) approved as a novel food a line of products made from the whole coffee fruit (including the seed or "bean") of the coffee plant Coffea arabica L., with the intended use as ingredients to beverages and food products. DRIED COFFEE CHERRY tea and infusions are traditionally consumed by the general population. No adverse events have been reported from human consumption where DRIED COFFEE CHERRY tea/infusion consumption takes place.

DRIED COFFEE CHERRY is intended to be used as the main ingredient for the preparation of non-alcoholic infusions. The estimated consumption is 2–3 cups of 250 ml per day (dose proposed for general population). Considering an average caffeine concentration of 45 mg per cup (250 ml-serving

cup), this will lead to an average intake of 135 mg caffeine per day, well below the safety threshold of 400 mg caffeine per day in non-pregnant adults (and below the safety threshold of 200 mg caffeine per day in pregnant women).

This application provides evidence based on the comprehensive available scientific literature and on target analysis of DRIED COFFEE CHERRY that shows the positive nutritional profile of cascara, in terms of macro- and micro-constituents as well as bioactive compounds. According to the collected information, the inherent components are not to be considered as harmful to health under the proposed use, intake and concentration levels. DRIED COFFEE CHERRY does not contain inherent toxic components.

The allergenic potential, according to the body of evidence collected from the scientific literature and the experience of prolonged use, does not pose any health concern. Any additional safety concern related to biological or chemical contamination, has been ruled out thanks to a comprehensive analysis of DRIED COFFEE CHERRY batches from the market and to the definition of proper specifications.

Analytical data on the occurrence of pesticides (+600 compounds), mycotoxins, heavy metals, mineral oils, microbial counts, pathogens, moulds and yeast, have been provided. The potential adverse effects have been evaluated from the literature, considering studies on animals as well as in vitro test.

Overall, the body of scientific evidence in the notification demonstrates that DRIED COFFEE CHERRY would not have a negative impact on human health when used for the preparation of hot/cold infusions, at the proposed concentration levels.