

**CODEX COMMITTEE ON CONTAMINANTS IN FOOD  
14<sup>th</sup> Session**

**Virtual session, 3-7 and 13 May 2021**

**Agenda Item 13:**

**Request for comments on the discussion paper on methylmercury in fish  
(CX/CF 21/14/11)**

*European Union Competence*

*European Union Vote*

The European Union (EU) welcomes and appreciates the work done on the discussion paper on methylmercury in fish by the electronic Working Group chaired by New Zealand and co-chaired by Canada.

The EU would like to make following comments:

**a) Maximum levels**

The EU agrees to start work on the establishment of MLs for orange roughy, Patagonian toothfish and pink cusk-eel. Based on the data in Appendix III, the EU could support an ML of 0.80 mg/kg methylmercury of orange roughy, which would result in a 3% rejection rate for the global data set. For pink cusk-eel, the EU could support an ML of 1.0 mg/kg, which corresponds to a 4% rejection rate for the global data set. For Patagonian toothfish the EU supports to postpone the discussion for a year, in order to allow for a further data collection.

The EU can agree to discontinue the review of additional fish species, but would also be happy to contribute in case it would be agreed to continue the data collection.

## **b) Sampling plans**

The EU agrees to progress the further development of the sampling plan based on the approach to specify sampling plans for specific weight classes. The EU notes that studies on larger fishes such as tuna and pink-cusk eel indicate that higher concentrations of mercury are present in the muscle close to the head, compared to the muscle close to the tail. The proposal in Table 3 of Appendix IV foresees for fishes of more than 10 kg, next to the options of sampling muscle at the head and tail or muscle from the middle, the option to sample only muscle close to the tail. As a more conservative approach the EU suggests to replace the option to sample muscle close to the tail by the option to sample muscle close to the head.

## **c) Other risk-management measures**

The EU welcomes a guidance on risk-management measures and therefore supports a literature review, in order to assess the feasibility to develop such guidance.

## **d) Establishment of the eWG**

The EU supports the re-establishment of the eWG to continue the work on the points a, b and c as listed in paragraph 78.