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**Hygiene requirements for fish oil
intended for human consumption**

1. HYGIENE LEGISLATION FOR FISH OIL INTENDED FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION

1.1. Restricted working group

Member States have been invited to participate in a restricted working group to address the practicability of the application of the current hygiene requirements for fish oil destined for human consumption. The first meeting will be scheduled to take place in November or December 2007.

In particular, certain third countries are experiencing practical difficulties in adjusting to the processing conditions in fish oil producing establishments in order to comply with the Regulation. There are transitional arrangements in place to give the possibility for establishments in third countries to adjust to the new requirements. The derogation period for third countries has now been extended by one extra year until 31 October 2008. During the transition period the rules for the EC Member States are stricter than the rules for third countries exporting fish oil for human consumption to the EU.

The working group is expected to finalise its work by April 2008 at the latest, as a technical vote, the period of the right of scrutiny of the European Parliament and the final vote must be calculated with a view to ensuring adoption prior to the end of the derogation period.

1.2. Hygiene Legislation on fish oil for human consumption

Fish oil is included in the definition of fisheries products as laid down in Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 when destined for human consumption. The provisions of this Regulation, including the relevant provisions of Annex III, Section VIII, therefore apply for the fish, fishing vessels and production establishments for fish oil, both crude oil and refined fish oil.

Commission Regulation No 1662/2006 provides more specific requirements for fish oil for human consumption and adds a new part E to Annex III, Section VIII, Chapter III:

“E. REQUIREMENTS FOR FISH OIL FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION

Food business operators must ensure that raw materials used in the preparation of fish oil for human consumption comply with the following requirements:

- (1) They must derive from fishery products which have been found fit for human consumption;
- (2) They must come from establishments, including vessels, approved in accordance with this Regulation;
- (3) They must be transported and stored until processing in hygiene conditions.”

2. Possible Issues for discussion

- (1) What is the experience of the Member States in their implementation of the requirements for fish oil for human consumption in Commission Regulation No 1662/2006 amending Annex III of Regulation (EC) 853/2004?
- (2) Have establishments producing crude oil been approved?
- (3) Have establishments refining crude oil been approved?
- (4) Other comments/suggestions