

OVERSEAS TRAVEL REPORT

For travel to Shanghai and Beijing, China
28th May to 2nd June 2017

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Executive Summary

Dr Stephen Pahl of SARDI Food Safety and Innovation from the Division of Livestock and Farming Systems travelled to China from 28th May 2017 to 2nd June 2017, visiting Shanghai and Beijing. The purpose of the trip was to participate in the mission by the Abalone Association of Australasia, the Seafood Trade Advisory Group and SafeFish. The aim of the mission was to develop networks and to better understand the food regulatory system in China prior to preparing a technical submission to the National Health and Family Planning Commission of the People's Republic of China to modify the Chinese Standards for Food Additives to permit the use of sulphites in fully preserved abalone.

The trip successfully conducted a series of meetings with:

- Chinese researchers from the Zhejiang Gongshang University who successfully applied for a change to the food safety regulations to allow sulphites in prawns in China
- A Chinese researcher from the Yellow Sea Fisheries Research Institute that provides technical support to the China National Centre for Food Safety Risk Assessment
- Industry representatives and potential consultants from the China Aquatic Products Processing and Marketing Alliance (CAPPMA) whose membership includes the newly formed Chinese association of abalone producers
- China Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Association (CIQA) who are potential partners in developing technical linkages between Australia and China
- and China Gate Consulting Company, the Chinese partner for previous unsuccessful submissions.

Many of the meetings were the first time any of the mission members had met with representatives of these organisations. Meetings were strategic and focussed in clearly articulating the technical necessity of using sulphites in fully preserved abalone and the current status of international regulations. Recommendations were sought on the potential pathways to progress the planned submission. This will be the third submission by the Abalone Association of Australasia, but the first that SafeFish will be involved in.

The delegation gained a strong understanding on the application procedure for food additives and made valuable contacts for future collaborations and technical exchanges. The technical submission aims to harmonise the Chinese Standards for Food Additives to the Codex General Standard of Food Additives. We were informed that food safety is a high priority for the Chinese Government who will examine each application carefully. We were also notified that for the application to be successful it will require the support of the Chinese abalone industry and relevant association members. Interest was expressed from CAPPMA on assisting us to obtain this support.

It is recommended that the technical submission to permit the use of sulphites in fully preserved abalone be progressed. Further discussions are needed with the mission participants to determine which organisations lead which components. Future activities should develop stronger relationships with Professor Dai from the Zhejiang Gongshang University and to gain the confidence and support of CAPPMA and CIQA. Potential for collaborative projects may include:

- Technical exchanges through conventions, seminars and conferences
- An assessment of residual SO₂ in fully preserved abalone processed or available in China
- Conduct comparative analysis of residual SO₂ in fully preserved abalone using the AOAC International and Chinese National Food Safety Standard methods
- Review and/or determine consumption data of fully-preserved abalone for Chinese populations.