

AUSTRALIA

Background and Fish Names History

Australia has more than 5,000 native species of finfish, and many more crustaceans and molluscs. Several hundred of these species are important commercially, and many others support recreational activities such as fishing and diving. Australia also imports seafood products consisting of many other fish species from around the world to help satisfy the increasing demand for seafood. Consistently 70-75% of what seafood Australians eat is imported!

Confusion over fish names has been caused by the numerous species Australia has on offer, many species being known by more than one name, and the same name being used for more than one species. As early as the 1920s, meetings were held in Sydney to discuss fish names as the local and regional variations were becoming apparent.

Extensive work on standardising names used for fish in Australia has been undertaken since the mid-1970s by industry, governments, scientists, and other stakeholders. Major progress has been made since 1992, as a result of strategic investments by the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation. Seafood Services Australia (SSA) accepted responsibility for standardising fish names in 2001 and continued to maintain this momentum. SSA was accredited as a standards-setting body in 2006 and subsequently developed the first version of this standard in conjunction with numerous stakeholders. SSA ceased operations in 2013.

FRDC immediately became accredited as a Standards Development Organization and has continued the maintenance and ongoing development of the Australian Fish Names Standard. FRDC has spent well over A\$5 million on the program to date but it is still a voluntary standard, yet all fisheries management adopt the standard names; it is impossible to export product without aligning to the standard name and it is impossible to have a food safety recall program if you do not have a fish name protocol aligned with the Standard! Something fishy there FSANZ....

Australian Fish Names Standard

The Australian Fish Names Standard AS 5300:

- a voluntary Standard (except export), to be utilised as an Australian industry best practice guide throughout the whole supply chain from primary producer (wild harvest or aquaculture), through to retailers and restaurants, including imported seafood;
- mandatory use for meeting export requirements and documentation, as referenced in the export legislation;

- was originally accepted and published as an official Australian Standard in 2007;
- specifies one Standard Fish Name for an individual species or group of species;
- includes approximately 5,000 Standard Fish Names;
- as an Australian Standard, it is independently audited annually to ensure compliance to meet [Standard Australia](#) requirements, along with the approved policies and procedures;
- is managed and continually developed by the [Fish Names Committee](#);
- the online searchable Fish Names Database has the most up-to-date information on all approved group and individual species names;
- [Fish Names Database can be downloaded here](#);
- The Australian Fish Names Standard (AS 5300) - a [voluntary \(except mandatory for export\) standard is available for viewing](#) at no cost to the user;
- Fish can mean “any aquatic vertebrate or invertebrate (excluding mammals and amphibians) in any form, including whole fish, or part thereof, in raw or cooked form, or as a fish product”; and
- This is an FRDC Project - 2021-021: The ongoing development, implementation, communication and extension of the Australian Fish Names Standard (AS 5300) and the Australian Aquatic Plant Names Standard (AS 5301) for 2021-2025 is supported by funding from the FRDC on behalf of the Australian Government.

Benefits of the Australian Fish Names Standard AS 5300

- Improved accuracy in trade descriptions enables consumers to make more informed choices when purchasing seafood and reduces the potential for confusion, misleading and deceptive conduct;
- Strengthen consumer confidence in what they are buying;
- Superior management of seafood-related public health incidents and food safety through improved labelling, traceability and species identification, which reduces public health risk and facilitates efficient product recall / withdrawal procedures;
- Improved monitoring and stock assessment enhances the sustainability of fisheries resources;
- Increased efficiency in seafood marketing improves consumer confidence and industry profitability; and

- Enhanced marketability and consumer acceptability of the standard fish names used for a species eliminating misleading and deceptive conduct.

Activities of the Fish Names Committee

- To develop and deliver communication and extension plans that increase stakeholder awareness and implementation of the Standard Fish Names throughout the supply chain;
- To enhance stakeholder engagement with the Standard, by ensuring transparency, fairness and honesty throughout the Standard process;
- To conduct stakeholder analysis to understand:
 - Who uses the Standard and how;
 - Feedback on the (i) application process; (ii) Standard, and (iii) Communication and Extension Plan;
- To improve the content and relevance of the Standard, as part of continuous improvement;
- To meet audit requirements to maintain accreditation as an Australian Standard;
- To publish an updated version of the Standard approximately every three years;
- To hold at least two FNC meetings a year.