

New date: Webinar on fish speciation for food authenticity



This webinar was originally announced for 3 February. However, due to an impact of Covid-19 outside of our control, we are having to postpone this webinar to 25 March 2021. We apologise for any inconvenience caused. If you have already registered to attend, please be assured that your registration will be transferred and we will be in touch with joining instructions.

About the webinar

This is the first webinar in the Quarterly Webinar Series of the Joint Knowledge Transfer Framework for Food Standards and Food Safety Analysis, which is a cross-government project (funded by Defra, FSA, FSS and the Government Chemist) aimed at disseminating knowledge from government funded research to stakeholders to support UK laboratory capability and promote best practice in food safety and standards analysis.

The webinar will take place on 25 March 2021, 15:00 (GMT) and will be presented by Dr Timothy Wilkes. Dr Wilkes has over 20 years' experience in the field of genetic research in academic and industrial sectors. He has extensive knowledge and expertise in the use of microarrays and qPCR technology for applications ranging from cancer diagnostics and functional gene analysis to food authenticity.

The webinar will be introduced by [Selvarani Elahi MBE](#), Deputy Government Chemist.

The webinar will be followed by a Q&A session. The Q&A panel will include Tim Wilkes, Malcolm Burns, LGC and Ivan Bartolo, [Sea Fish Industry Authority](#). The event will be chaired by Mark Woolfe, [Food Authenticity Network](#).

Further resources

The training materials developed through this framework are available on:

For more information about the work of the Government Chemist please contact:

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1. 16 March 2021

This event will now include a Q&A session with a panel of experts.

2. 29 January 2021

Webinar date has been changed

3. 12 January 2021

First published.

Ofsted inspections to be done remotely



We have reviewed our plans for the inspections of schools, early years and further education, which were due to begin next week. In light of a change in emphasis from the government and clear advice to 'act as if you have the virus' over the next few weeks, we have decided that all planned inspection activity will be carried out remotely until March 8 at the earliest.

We have sought regular advice from Public Health England and we remain satisfied that our planned on-site activity would be safe and appropriate under current restrictions. However, the new government messages and the practical challenges of deploying inspectors across England have prompted this change.

[Remote inspections of schools and further education providers](#) will begin from 25 January, with a particular focus on how well children and learners are being educated remotely. We will inspect schools rated 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' as planned, but we will also follow up on complaints raised by parents across all grades of school in order to resolve issues. As these inspections will not involve an on-site visit, they will be unable to cover the full scope of a monitoring inspection. We will publish details of the inspection process shortly.

We will continue to undertake on-site inspections if we have immediate concerns – for example about safeguarding, the leadership of a school or a failure to provide education to children.

It is not possible to provide the necessary level of assurance of early years providers without an on-site inspection of the premises, so [early years assurance visits](#) will be paused until March 8 at the earliest.

We will continue with our vital regulatory work in early years and children's social care. This work will sometimes require on-site visits, which will be risk-assessed based on the nature of the premises and the urgency of the work.

Published 12 January 2021

Last updated 2 February 2021 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 2 February 2021

Updated dates to clarify that we will carry out planned inspection work until 8 March at the earliest.

2. 12 January 2021

First published.

Working together to achieve the clean energy transition

Secretary-General Guterres, Ministers, friends.

It is an absolute honour to join you all to mark the 75th anniversary of the United Nations.

In a year which is going to be momentous for progress on tackling climate change.

And no organisation has done more to bring countries together to tackle the threat of climate change than the United Nations.

And I want to thank the Secretary-General for his continued and incredibly decisive leadership on this issue.

And also I want to thank all of you, who have contributed to today's discussion, for your leadership.

We have had some brilliant contributions today and I wanted to give just a few examples.

We've heard about Nigeria connecting five million homes with solar power.

We've heard about Ethiopia expanding energy access across through off-grid renewables.

We've heard about Germany phasing out coal and doubling climate finance.

We've heard about Spain legislating for net zero and supporting a just transition.

Of course, the African Development Bank supporting transformational projects across the continent.

And I think what this shows is that it is absolutely vital that we continue to work together in this way collaboratively.

Because tackling the climate crisis requires a truly global effort.

Rising sea levels, heatwaves, mega storms and droughts – these do not respect borders and frontiers.

And that is why we need everyone to play their part.

Whether it is Governments, or regions and development banks, business, investors, and civil society.

We all understand that a truly global effort to respond to a global crisis.

As you have heard from our Italian partners, we are putting climate action at the heart of the international agenda this year.

Through our work on COP26 and also our respective G7 and G20 presidencies.

And it is why a key goal of my COP26 Presidency is enhancing international collaboration, which is vital..

This is needed to deliver the transition required in mitigation, adaptation and finance.

And I have said it before, and I say it once again.

The golden thread of climate action must be woven through every international gathering that we have this year.

By working together, we can innovate faster, create economies of scale, and strengthen incentives for investment.

But we will only access those gains, by tailoring our approach to each challenge or sector.

That is why I welcome the IEA's excellent plans for a Net Zero roadmap.

Setting out what must be done in each sector, to reach net zero by 2050.

It is why I am proud to work with Germany, Italy, Morocco and other friends on Mission Innovation.

Speeding up clean energy innovation.

And it is why our COP26 campaigns are focussing global efforts on five critical challenges:

Nature, finance, adaptation, transport, and, of course in the context of our discussion today, energy.

We all know that the power sector exemplifies the benefits of collaboration.

The IEA, and our friend Fatih Birol, tell us that the global transition to clean power must move at least four times faster than the current pace, if we are to keep our Paris targets within reach.

And we must do so in a way that is fair to all, whilst increasing access to electricity around the world.

Of course, action from individual states is vital.

Ethiopia's have had a recent deal for a 100 mega-watt wind farm.

Or Morocco's Noor Solar Complex – the world's largest concentrated solar plant.

Our efforts in this area reinforce one another.

And they allow us to make progress faster.

Civil society has helped build support for clean power in many countries.

As we've heard, economies of scale have reduced costs for everyone.

Solar and wind power costs have fallen by 28% and 15% respectively, each time global deployment has doubled.

Together, we can build on these gains.

And support the transition in developing countries.

Bringing the economic and environmental benefits of clean, resilient, affordable power to people around the world.

It is an absolute pleasure to work with all of you here to achieve this.

With Ethiopia, Germany, Italy, and Senegal, and others, the UK is a member of the Powering Past Coal Alliance, driving that move away from coal.

And as part of our COP26 campaign on clean power, the UK has launched the Energy Transition Council.

I am incredibly grateful to the brilliant Damilola Ogunbiyi for co-chairing

the group, it's making a big, big difference.

And of course all of you here for taking part.

Thank you so much!

The Council brings together political, financial and technical leaders in the global power sector.

And works with business and civil society, to accelerate the move from coal to clean power, in a way that is fair to all.

And to improve the international support to developing countries.

So friends, I say this to you – by working together, we can achieve the clean energy transition, at the scale and pace that is actually required, whilst protecting jobs and livelihoods.

If I can say this to us all, this is our moment in history to make those vital, decisive and positive choices, so that we can protect the future of our planet and our peoples.

So let's continue to work together, to bring the benefits of clean, affordable and resilient power to the world.

And I give you my pledge, we will do everything we can together to see success at COP26.

Government strengthens digital leadership

Alex Chisholm, Chief Operating Officer for the Civil Service and Permanent Secretary for the Cabinet Office has today announced the appointment of three senior Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) leaders by the Government:

- Paul Willmott will Chair a new Central Digital and Data Office (CDDO) for the Government
- Joanna Davinson will be appointed the Executive Director of CDDO
- Tom Read will be the new Chief Executive Officer of Government Digital Service (GDS)

The Cabinet Office will establish the Central Digital and Data Office for Government – the new strategic centre for Digital, Data and Technology for the Government – in early February.

As the country looks ahead to new opportunities, including tackling coronavirus and rebuilding our economy, the Civil Service Digital, Data and

Technology function will be integral to its success and these appointments will strengthen the leadership, power and presence in this critical area.

The Cabinet Office has invited Joanna Davinson, who has 30 years experience of technology enabled transformation to be the Executive Director of the Central Digital and Data Office, which will be chaired by Paul Willmott, Chief Digital Adviser for LEGO Brands Group, one of the UK's most experienced digital executives and thought leaders. Tom Read will be the new Chief Executive Officer of Government Digital Service. The appointments have been approved by the Prime Minister.

Reporting to the Chief Operating Officer for the Civil Service, the Central Digital and Data Office will shape strategy and assure delivery for Digital, Data and Technology across government. As Executive Director of the Central Digital and Data Office, Joanna Davinson will be the professional head of the government's 18,000 strong Digital, Data and Technology profession and lead the Digital, Data and Technology function for Government.

As Chief Executive Officer of Government Digital Service, Tom Read will oversee the operation of their standards, controls and assurance functions, and enhance their focus on the development and delivery of new digital products and services.

Together, they will be responsible for shaping and delivering the government's innovation and transformation strategies to overhaul legacy IT systems, strengthen our cyber security, improve capability, and ensure the government can better leverage data and emerging technologies.

Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office, Julia Lopez MP said:

I'm delighted to announce these three impressive appointments, whose mix of skills and experience will enhance our Digital, Data and Technology leadership capability and make real our ambition to deliver the public with better, more personalised public services that will enhance our reputation as the world's most digitally-advanced government.

Paul Willmott said:

This is an exciting and important moment for digital government in the UK. There is a clear mission to establish the UK as global leader in digital government and to provide citizens with better services. The ambition and challenges are substantial but, from what I've seen, we have both the capabilities and determination to succeed. I'm delighted to be able to help.

Joanna Davinson said:

It is an honour and a privilege to be chosen to lead the government Digital, Data and Technology profession and community and to have the opportunity to shape government digital, data and technology on a national scale. I am looking forward to working with department Chief Digital Information Officers and their teams and with other colleagues across government, to develop and deliver the strategies and plans that enable the UK to lead the way in serving its citizens by being one of the most digitally advanced governments in the world.

Tom Read said:

To have the opportunity to lead Government Digital Service into its next era is incredibly exciting and one that I cannot wait to get started on. Never has it been more important to build, deliver and support services that are fundamentally based on the needs of our users. I look forward to delivering a refreshed focus on the development and delivery of digital products and services underpinned by strong digital standards.

Defence Secretary hails support for military families

Speaking as he officially received Andrew Selous MP's 'Living In Our Shoes' report into the needs of service families, which was published last June, the Defence Secretary said progress has already been made against many of the report's recommendations.

These include a £200 million cash injection for vital improvements and renovations to service family and single-living accommodation and the launch of the Partner Career Support Programme Pilot, which provides online career advice and mentoring to spouses and partners of service personnel.

In addition, military families across several defence sites have benefitted from the roll out of the 'wraparound childcare' pilot, which so far has provided children of service personnel aged 4-11 with free breakfast and after-school care.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

My thanks go to Andrew Selous and his team for compiling such a thorough and valuable report. I'm pleased we've already made significant progress with initiatives such as free childcare and

giving service families more choice and flexibility about where they live.

Without service families, our Armed Forces couldn't do their job, so it's vital they receive the best support possible to live, work and bring up a family.

We will shortly be introducing new legislation to strengthen the Armed Forces Covenant and make the recognition and care of service families a national priority.

Fulfilling a manifesto commitment, the Armed Forces Bill will seek to strengthen the Covenant in law, helping ensure that service personnel, their families and veterans are not disadvantaged because of their service.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Johnny Mercer said:

Armed Forces families are at the very heart of our military and it is only right that we do everything we can to guarantee service personnel and their loved ones are not disadvantaged due to the unique nature of service life.

The wellbeing of our Armed Forces goes beyond the MoD and we will continue to work with the devolved administrations, the charitable sector and across government to take forward Andrew Selous' recommendations as we refresh our UK Armed Forces Families Strategy.

The refreshed Forces Families Strategy, to be published this summer, seeks to make life in the Armed Forces community an attractive place to raise a family, helping them to embrace the rewarding aspects of service life and overcome its unique challenges.

To build on a range of government initiatives brought in to support veterans over the past year, the Ministry of Defence will also introduce new measures to help Armed Forces personnel and their families prepare for transition to the civilian world from the beginning of their service career.

These include the development of a life skills training package such as personal monitoring and assessment tools. This follows last year's publication of the Defence Holistic Transition Policy which provides an additional layer of support for service personnel during their departure from service into civilian life.