Quality Index Method - An objective tool for determination of sensory quality

Sensory evaluation is one of the most important methods for assessing freshness and quality in the fish sector and in fish-inspection services. Sensory methods performed in a proper way are a rapid and accurate tool providing unique information about food. Traditionally, sensory methods have been seen as a subjective assessment of quality. However, sensory methods can be turned into an objective tool. European fisheries research institutes have developed such a tool, by which sensory assessment is performed in a systematic way with an objective quality assessment method called the Quality Index Method (QIM). It is foreseen that the QIM will be useful to give feedback to fishermen concerning the quality of their catch, which may in turn influence better handling on board. The QIM is a promising method for quick and reliable assessment of the freshness of fish. It is expected to become the leading reference method for the assessment of fresh fish within the European community. It could also become a part of labelling and identification of the catch, particularly in electronic auctioning of catch.