

21 March 2003

You have invited us to conveying comments with regard to a recent WHO consultation document. This consultation document which provides a framework for the elaboration of a WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health was discussed yesterday by ESPA experts. The comments made by ESPA Secretariat were elaborated as follows.

Best regards.
Bernard Moinier
European Salt Producers Association

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3. The problem

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In all countries...

...levels of physical activity. In the reverse, universal salt iodisation (USI) participates worldwide in the prevention of iodine deficiency disorders (IDD).

Their spectrum is well known: congenital anomalies, increased infant mortality, impaired mental function, retarded physical development and goitre.

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4. The solution

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(6th bullet)

- *reduce salt consumption from all sources and ensure salt is iodised*

The most cost-effective method for the prevention of iodine deficiency disorders (IDD) is universal salt iodisation (USI) which is recommended by WHO,

and supported by UNICEF as the appropriate strategy to achieve IDD elimination. Its elimination has a positive effect on women's health, child learning capacity, social costs, and economic productivity.

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5. Principles of action

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(7th bullet)

The food industry has a critical role to play in providing healthy and affordable food

Their initiatives to reduce the amount of salt should not preclude its technological functions in the processing of food and the related properties (quality, safety).

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6. From science to action

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(1st paragraph)

Action should be based on systematic needs assessment and solid evidence. Thus expert reports should not be deformed by a one-sided selection of references, and biased interpretation of data.

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Incentives to make market work for chronic disease prevention and control

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Universal salt iodisation (USI) involves the iodisation of all human and livestock salt, including salt used by the food industry, on a sustainable basis thanks to cooperation across the various stakeholders.