



Fish Name Fact File No 1

Basa

The FRDC Fish Names Committee is responsible for the maintenance and ongoing development of the Australian Fish Names Standard (AS 5300). The FNC makes decisions on the Standard Fish Names to be used for all species traded in Australia. Decisions made by the FNC are based on the fish name protocols that give guidance to names, and stakeholder feedback.

Most FNC decisions are straightforward and/or non-contentious but, in some cases, the background to the name selection and the FNC reasons need to be fully articulated.

This is one of a series of fact sheets about fish species that the FNC has considered and that need further explanation. The fact sheet provides the background as to how the name was selected and why it was approved.

Background to FNC Decision

Basa is a farmed white fleshed fish of the Pangasiidae family which is imported in large volumes from south-east Asia, where it is predominantly farmed in ponds, tanks and cages.

Until June 2000 most imports of *Pangasius* species (mainly *P.hypophthalmus*) were labelled “Pacific Dory” or “Freshwater Fillets”.

The Fish Names Committee determined that the name ‘Pacific Dory’ was grossly inaccurate and misleading, and should not continue to be used for the following two reasons:

- the family Pangasiidae is not, nor related to, the dories and their relatives (Order Zeiformes);
- they are freshwater species and not from the Pacific Ocean.

In 2002, the Seafood Importers Association of Australasia proposed the name ‘Basa’ for all species of the Pangasiidae family, and ‘Royal Basa’ for *Pangasius bocourti*, which is the superior quality species and commands premium price.

After widespread public consultation, the FNC approved the names, BASA and Royal Basa. The name Basa is now widely used in the industry and is an internationally accepted name for the group.

Affected species

Approved Standard Fish Name	BASA	Royal Basa
Scientific Name	Pangasiidae (imported species)	<i>Pangasius bocourti</i>
Authority		Sauvage, 1880
CAAB Code	37 177750	37 177751
Redundant names or names NOT to be used	Pacific Dory, Mekong catfish, shark catfish	

FNC Application Number	App 061	App 060
Date of FNC Decision	29 April 2002	29 April 2002

Further Discussion and Clarification

Despite the generally widespread acceptance of the approved names, a number of unscrupulous or ill-informed retailers and food service outlets continue to use the name 'Pacific Dory' in attempt to deceptively capitalise on the popularity of other prized but unrelated species such as John Dory.

Consumers need to be aware that the use of the name Pacific Dory is not supported for members of the family Pangasiidae, and statements that Pacific Dory is an acceptable alternative name are incorrect.

Status of the Australian Fish Names Standard

Usage of the names included in the Australian Fish Names Standard is strongly encouraged but not currently mandatory.

Usage of the Australian Fish Names Standard is listed as an Advisory Note in the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code - Standard 2.2.3 - Fish and Fish Products (see <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2011C00569>).