

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Health
Organization

Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy - Tel: (+39) 06 57051 - E-mail: codex@fao.org - www.codexalimentarius.org

Agenda Item 2

CX/NASWP 19/15/2

August 2019

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

FAO/WHO COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR NORTH AMERICA AND SOUTH WEST PACIFIC

Fifteenth Session

Port Vila, Vanuatu, 16 - 20 September 2019

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

MANAGING FOOD SAFETY IN AN ERA OF ACCELERATED CLIMATE CHANGE

1. Climate change threatens our ability to ensure global food security, eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development.
2. Climate change can also cause food safety challenges. For example, extreme weather events such as floods and droughts may lead to contamination of soil, agricultural lands, water, food and animal feed with pathogens, chemicals and other hazardous substances originating from sewage, agriculture and industrial settings. Water and food sanitation is a particular concern during emergencies due to natural disasters. Especially in vulnerable agro-ecological zones, such as the Pacific, this can result in immediate problems, but also pose challenges for long term recovery and rehabilitation owing to contamination of natural resources such as land and fresh water.
3. Climate change can influence the occurrence of known hazards and introduce new ones. For example, changes in the distribution of fungal populations causing mycotoxins can impact on mycotoxin contamination of staple foods such as rice and maize, on which the world's population relies heavily. Furthermore, climate change may cause an increase in the occurrence of gastro-enteritis caused by, for example, *Vibrio cholerae* or *Giardia*. The warming of waters is likely to increase the occurrence of Ciguatera fish poisoning and raise histamine levels in Pacific fish and fishery products.
4. A keynote speaker from Vanuatu will give an overview of the impact of climate change on food production and food safety and current efforts and experiences from Vanuatu to minimize its negative effects.
5. Based on the presentation, Member countries of the NASWP region have the opportunity to share their experiences to address food safety and food security challenges caused by climate change, and identify areas and mechanisms for regional cooperation and collaboration.