

# CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



World Health  
Organization

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**Agenda Item 10**

**CRD22**

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**ORIGINAL LANGUAGE ONLY**

## **JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME**

### **CODEX COMMITTEE ON CONTAMINANTS IN FOODS**

#### **16th Session**

**18-21 April 2023 (physical plenary meeting)**

**26 April 2023 (virtual report adoption)**

#### **DISCUSSION PAPER ON THE PREVENTION OR REDUCTION OF CIGUATERA POISONING**

*Comments submitted by the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Division*

1. In 2017, when the FAO/WHO Expert meeting on ciguatera took place, it was agreed to stop referencing to ciguatera fish poisoning (CFP) and to refer to ciguatera poisoning (CP), acknowledging the fact that other aquatic animals could carry the toxin. It should be noted that sub-chronic exposure to ciguatoxic animals, although non-predatory, could lead to similar toxic effects. FAO considers that this concept should be reflected in a future Code of Practice (CoP).
2. Consumer awareness plays a key role in the prevention of CP, for this reason, it is important that national authorities provide clear information on the risks associated with consumption of certain seafood, and update recommendations as required. The information should be easily accessible for consumers and include avoidance of tissues that can contain high levels of CTXs, and other bioactive compounds that may pose a significant health risk. FAO considers that the key role of the national authorities in risk communication and provision of clear consumer advice should be reflected in a future CoP.
3. It would be important that the CoP provides guidance for producers based on surveillance and monitoring data, identifying aquatic species of concern; at the same time, it would be important that the CoP also provides guidance to fishers and processors on good practices for disposal of ciguatoxic animals.
4. It will be important that data generated by different institutions and authorities responsible for environmental monitoring, food safety, and health be shared to inform appropriate risk management actions. FAO considers that this concept should be reflected in a future CoP.