

To Climate, Agriculture, and Finance Ministers of OECD countries and China, and HE Mukhtar Babayev COP29 President-Designate, Azerbaijan Special Envoy for Climate Change.

Excellencies, colleagues,

In your roles as COP29 President-Designate and as Ministers from OECD countries and China you have a strong commitment to climate action and a dedication to ensure that COP29 is a success. COP29 can be the turning point we need for climate action in this critical decade. As environmental ministers and officials from countries in the Global South, we propose the following:

Considering that:

1. Our food system causes 33%¹ of all global GHG-emissions, of which livestock production contributes 14,5%² to 20%³, it therefore generates the majority of global food related GHG emissions.
2. Meat consumption on average is 26.6 kg per capita/year in developing countries, 71,4 kg per capita/year in the OECD countries, and 61,98 kg per capita/year in China⁴, exceeding global and national dietary and planetary guidelines.⁵
3. The total global herd size in livestock units is projected to rise by 37 up to 46 percent between 2012 and 2050⁶, which does not align with the Paris Climate Agreement goal of net zero emissions by 2050.
4. The climate footprint of beef (70 kg GHG-emission/kg food), pork (12 kg GHG- emission/kg) and chicken (9,9 kg GHG-emission/kg) is relatively high compared to other food proteins like legumes (2 kg/kg), nuts (0,4 kg/kg), among others.⁷
5. The livestock sector is a key driver of land-use change and biodiversity loss, causing 13 billion hectares of deforestation annually due to land conversion for agricultural uses as pastures or cropland, with detrimental effects on water, soil, biodiversity, and climate change.⁸
6. The last IPCC report recognized these issues and proposed GHG-emission taxes on meat and dairy in high income countries.⁹

¹ United Nations, "Food and Climate Change: Healthy Diets for a Healthier Planet | United Nations," 2022, <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/climate-issues/food>

² Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, "Tackling Climate Change Through Livestock: Key Facts and Findings," 2013, <https://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/197623/icode/>

³ Oliver Milman, "Meat Accounts for Nearly 60% of All Greenhouse Gases from Food Production, Study Finds," The Guardian, September 14, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/sep/13/meat-greenhouses-gases-food-production-study>

⁴ Heinrich Böll Stiftung, Friends of the Earth Europe, and BUND, "Meat Atlas 2021: Facts and Figures about the Animals We Eat", 2021, <https://eu.boell.org/en/MeatAtlas>, p 13

⁵ Sheila A. Wiseman et al., "Future Food: Sustainable Diets for Healthy People and a Healthy Planet," International Journal of Nutrology 12, no. 01 (September 1, 2019): 023–028, <https://doi.org/10.1055/s-0039-1695714>

⁶ Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, "Food and Agriculture Projections to 2050 | Global Perspectives Studies", 2018, <https://www.fao.org/global-perspectives-studies/food-agriculture-projections-to-2050/en/>

⁷ United Nations, "Food and Climate Change: Healthy Diets for a Healthier Planet | United Nations," 2022, <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/science/climate-issues/food>

⁸ Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, "Livestock and Landscapes," n.d., <https://www.fao.org/3/ar591e/ar591e.pdf>

⁹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, "Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change," United Nations, 2022, <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/>, p 153-157

7. The last COP27 Presidency also addressed high meat consumption levels in high income countries and the need to reduce it.¹⁰
8. In the COP28 UAE Declaration on Food and Climate, 159 countries pledged “shifting from higher greenhouse gas-emitting practices to more sustainable production and consumption approaches.”¹¹
9. The FAO Roadmap ‘Global Roadmap for Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG2) without Breaching the 1.5°C Threshold’ stated that “high consumption of food products with high GHG footprints in some locations contribute unnecessarily to emissions in agrifood systems” and mentioned a target to reduce emissions from livestock production by 3% annually and CO2 neutral agrifood systems by 2035 through a change in food taxes.¹²
10. Small island developing states (SIDS) and G77 countries in Africa and Asia suffer most from the negative effects of high footprint diets in the forms of severe climate change, loss of harvests, sea level rise and deforestation.¹³
11. Policies to reduce meat consumption are underrepresented in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), as reflected on in the first Global Stocktake (GST).¹⁴
12. Over three thousand companies and NGO’s from over a hundred countries signed a letter to the presidents of the fifty countries that consume the most meat per capita, asking them to implement policies to reduce the consumption of meat and dairy through carbon pricing systems.¹⁵

We believe that COP29 and UNFCCC Climate Conferences thereafter can only be successful if the closing statement:

- A. Includes “transitioning away from animal protein overconsumption according to national or global dietary guidelines by implementing GHG-Emission pricing mechanisms in agri-food systems.”
- B. Urges the EU Commission, OECD countries, and China to lead the way towards harmonized GHG-emission pricing in agri-food systems.
- C. Urges the use of at least 20% of the revenue¹⁶ of above-mentioned GHG-Emission pricing mechanisms to finance the Loss and Damage Fund.

As signatories of this letter, we seek to generate a sense of urgency and promote collaborative action among all nations. We hope our concerns are considered so that COP29 and future COPs can become a success.

¹⁰ COP27, “Round table on “Food Security””, The Sharm El-Sheikh Climate Implementation Summit, 7 november 2022, <https://cop27.eg/assets/files/days/COP27%20FOOD%20SECURITY-DOC-01-EGY-10-22-EN.pdf>, p 2.

¹¹ COP28 UAE Declaration on Food and Climate, UNFCCC, 2023, <https://www.cop28.com/en/food-and-agriculture>

¹² Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, “SDG2 Roadmap”, 2023 <https://www.fao.org/interactive/sdg2-roadmap/en/>

¹³ The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, “Poverty and Climate Change”, 2010, <https://www.oecd.org/env/cc/2502872.pdf>

¹⁴ Framework Convention on Climate Change, “Summary report following the third meeting of the technical dialogue of the first global stocktake under the Paris Agreement”, 15 August 2023, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/GST_TD1.3%20Summary%20Report_15_August_Final.pdf

¹⁵ Future Food Price (2021). www.futurefoodprice.org

¹⁶ A GHG-Pricing of \$0,10 per 100 grams of meat could generate approximately \$186bn annually. Calculations based on 71,4 kg per capita/year in the OECD countries, and 61,98 kg per capita/year in China and 2023 population statistics of 1,385bn in OECD and 1,409bn in China.

Thank you very much in advance, on behalf of all signatories¹⁷:

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List of signatories

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NAWADRA, Sefanaia, Director General, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), representing 21 Pacific Small Island Developing States : <https://www.sprep.org/members>

NDONG NZANG, José Nsue, UNFCCC Focal Point for the Ministry of Environment. Equatorial Guinea

TOIRAMBE BAMONINGA, Benjamin, Secretary General for the Environment and Development, République Démocratique du Congo

TUINABUNA, Tomasi, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways, Fiji

YARKPAWOLO, Emmanuel Urey, Executive Director of the Environmental Protection Agency, Liberia

¹⁷ Non-OECD countries and NGOs can sign the letter by filling in this form:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScRqhEAsrvvAG7yKJbdkYZASJaRPZUC3a4IcToIKH1N3FqsJg/viewform>

List of NGOs that have signed the Declaration

List of countries:

African countries:

Nigeria
Uganda
Chad
Equatorial Guinea
Democratic Republic of Congo
Liberia

Small Island Developing States in the Pacific SPREP Member countries and territories:

American Samoa
Cook Islands
Federated States of Micronesia
Fiji
French Polynesia
Guam
Kiribati
Marshall Islands
Nauru
New Caledonia
Niue
Northern Marianas
Palau
Papua New Guinea
Samoa
Solomon Islands
Tokelau
Tonga
Tuvalu
Vanuatu
Wallis & Futuna

All Supporting NGOs

