JOHNS HOPKINS
CENTER for A LIVABLE FUTURE

December 2018

CLIMATE SOLUTIONS:
SHIFTING DIETS AND REDUCING WASTED FOOD

Talanoa Dialogue Submission for COP 24

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Where are we?

Food system activities, including the production, transport and disposal of food, generate up to 30% of global human-caused greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Livestock production alone accounts for an estimated 14.5% of those emissions. Research suggests that, assuming rising meat and dairy consumption with a rising global population, emissions from food production alone could nearly exhaust the emissions budget for all sectors by 2050. Furthermore, nearly 1/3 of the food produced globally is wasted. Discarding food is akin to discarding all the embodied GHG emissions involved in its production, processing, transportation, storage, and preparation.

Where do we want to go?

Dramatic reductions in meat and dairy consumption in high-consuming populations, alongside global reductions in food waste, are crucial for keeping warming to 1.5°C and avoiding the most catastrophic climate change scenarios.

How do we get there?

1) **Include experts on sustainable food consumption and waste** in Talanoa roundtables, and in future discussions of climate change mitigation pathways leading up to the next round of countries' Nationally Determined Contributions.

2) **Include consumption-based emissions accounting in national and sub-national climate commitments.** Such accounting methods exist and can provide a more complete picture of mitigation pathways and progress, but have not yet been adopted widely by governments.

3) **Build upon existing efforts to support dietary shifts and food waste reductions.**
   - Some cities are already measuring consumption-based food emissions. Others are adopting behavioral campaigns like Meatless Monday to introduce consumers to plant-rich foods.
   - NGOs, food service providers, institutions, and governments from local to federal levels are partnering to implement procurement standards that support purchasing and serving more plant-rich meals.
   - Several countries have recommended reducing meat consumption in their dietary guidelines and have set goals aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 (halving food waste by 2030).

4) **Draw on the expertise and perspectives of civil society.** A growing number of academics and NGOs are focusing their efforts on including demand-side food system solutions to climate change. They have both expertise and connections with citizens most affected by the impacts of climate change and understand the potential solutions required to effectively shift diets and reduce waste.

For the Center for a Livable Future's full Talanoa Dialogue submission with references, go to: https://tinyurl.com/jh-clf-talanoa

About The Center for a Livable Future

Since 1996, the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future has been addressing some of the most pressing issues in the food system while advancing public health and protecting the environment. As an interdisciplinary academic center based within the Bloomberg School of Public Health, the Center for a Livable Future is a leader in public health research, education, policy, and advocacy that is dedicated to building a healthier, more equitable, and resilient food system. www.jhsph.edu/clf