

Petition to Include Meatless Monday in Member Country Climate Action Plans

Climate change is no longer right around the corner - it is happening right now. The urgency of the climate change problem demands that our world leaders in the United Nations take a leadership role in providing simple actions individuals around the world can take to have an immediate impact.

As the UN Member Countries gather for COP21 in Paris to address the serious threat of climate change, much of the discussion will be focused on long-term changes that need to be made by governments and industry. We call on our world leaders to not only address the changes that need to be made by government and industry, but to also address what individuals can do to contribute to climate change mitigation.

A simple and meaningful action that Member Countries can take to reduce their carbon footprints is to include Meatless Monday initiatives in their climate action plans.

When the full life cycle emissions of meat is considered, livestock account for a 1/5th of total global GHG emissions and world meat production and consumption has grown exponentially since the 1960s, and is projected to grow an additional 70 to 80 percent by 2050.

Reducing the demand for meat, even by a relatively small amount, would therefore have a significant impact on GHG emissions, human health and the environment. In fact, according to new research by the Center for a Livable Future at Johns Hopkins University, **Member Countries can reduce their carbon emissions up to 2% per year by implementing Meatless Monday initiatives.**

Meatless Monday is a global grassroots movement to cut out meat once a week. The campaign, which started in 2003 in the United States at Johns Hopkins University, got a big boost in 2009 when Raj Pachauri called for a one day a week reduction in conjunction with the release of the UN FAO's 'Livestock's Long Shadow' report:

"Changes in lifestyle and behaviour patterns can contribute to climate-change mitigation across all sectors. Individuals can make a difference in this regard by altering their diets through consuming less meat - say by giving up meat at least one day a week. Reducing meat consumption in this manner will make individuals healthier, as well as the planet." - Raj Pachauri

This statement inspired Sir Paul McCartney to start Meatfree Monday in the UK which accelerated the campaign's adoption in Europe and around the world.

Today, Meatless Monday campaigns can be found in over 40 countries including such diverse partners as Iran, Israel, the Philippines, Brazil, Denmark, Nigeria and Kuwait. Besides Sir Paul McCartney, other notable participants/supporters include Oprah Winfrey, Chef Mario Batali, Benjamin Netanyahu, the Norwegian military, the Taiwan Ministry of Education, and many other key influencers around the world.

Member Countries can leverage the popularity and positive impact of Meatless Monday on climate change by including the following types of initiatives in their Climate Action Plans, many of which have already been adopted by local governments:

- Requiring all public schools, universities and hospitals to go meatless one day a week in their cafeterias
- Serving meatless meals at government offices and during official government functions
- Asking restaurants to promote Meatless Monday options on their menus
- Encouraging private businesses to adopt Meatless Mondays in their cafeterias

We strongly encourage Member Countries to consider including these initiatives in your proposals. One meatless day a week can make a world of difference.

Send this petition to Ban Ki Moon's office bkm@un.org, Framework Convention on Climate Change secretariat@unfccc.int, and any other people who can help.