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Join the Food Revolution!

Join the pledge for the Publication of the Communication on 'Building a Sustainable European Food System'

In April 2013, the European Commission announced that the Communication entitled "Building a Sustainable European Food System" would be published by the end of 2013 or early 2014. The Commission has not only invested a lot of resources in creating this important document, it also held a very successful public consultation last year, and the final Communication was agreed by three Commissioners (DG AGRI, DG ENVI and DG SANCO).

This Communication is a wake-up call to the European Union to address food waste, which is an economical, ecological, social and ethical insult to what the EU stands for. But the Communication is not only relevant to address the issue of food waste. This is a particularly pertinent document because it looks at the whole food system, and the many aspects of sustainable food, that could guide the EU to move forward a coherent European Food Policy and secure the sustainable production and consumption of food in Europe in the coming years.

The Food Sector is one of the major contributors to environmental pressures.

The food sector is one of the major contributors to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It is crucial that the European Commission has a clear strategy on sustainable food production and consumption in order to mitigate climate change. With recent reports citing that carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has grown at its fastest rate in three decades, it is clear that we must act now.

Agriculture and food production and consumption, particularly animal products, have been identified by United Nations agencies as one of the most important drivers of environmental pressures, especially habitat change, climate change, water use and air pollution.

Sustainable food policies are what people want

95% of European citizens, recently said in a Eurobarometer poll that protecting the environment was personally important to them, over 50% of Europeans think the EU is not doing enough to protect the environment, and almost one quarter are particularly concerned by how their consumption choices affect the environment.

Increasingly citizens, scientists, companies, organisations and policy makers are aware that the current

food system is not sustainable and we will have to change it from production to consumption. That means changing the often unsustainable ways we produce food, identifying why we are wasting so much of everything produced (In the EU, food waste has been estimated at some 89 million tonnes, or 180 kg per capita per year), using different production methods respectful of the diversity of ecosystems based on agroecological practices. It means encourage shorter food supply chains and changing our consumption habit towards food. There is no other choice, if we want to be able to feed sustainably 8 billion people in 2030 with growing food insecurity.

EU elected representatives on the move to make the Communication on Sustainable Food effective

A Group of elected representatives of the citizens of the European Union are mobilised to seek the best policies to protect the health and environment of our citizens during their mandates in the European Parliament. They wish that the Communication on Sustainable Food Systems will be a first step towards tackling the many aspects of sustainable food and developing a truly holistic system, which considers the growing body of evidence pointing to the damage to the environment and human health caused by current food waste, pesticide use and excessive meat consumption. This group of elected representatives believe it is crucial that the European Commission outlines coherent policy measures to tackle the issue of sustainable food, including information campaigns to guide the public on the importance of the protection of biodiversity and the crucial role of small scale producers in the process. These campaigns should also include information on sustainable diet with reduced meat consumption and lower intakes of fat and sugar as well as important social goals, such as higher animal welfare-friendly products which imply clear information to consumers on the origin and methods of production of these products.

MEPs involved in this initiative have recently sent a common letter urging the European Commission not to delay the publication of the communication any further.

On 24 September, Greens/EFA MEPs also submitted an oral question to the Commission asking why the Commission has not yet adopted this overdue initiative announced in its work programme, even though the Commissioner responsible, Janez Potočnik informed that the document is ready to go and could be adopted immediately.

Join the Food Revolution: Make the publication of the Communication on Sustainable Food come true!

Personal engagement and participative democracy are key to determining and improving food policies throughout Europe. The past years EU citizens and civil society have worked dynamically at grass roots level to implement alternative practices to the current food policy model. Projects promoting improvements to the current food system are growing all around Europe.

If you are part of such projects it is time now to make it known better to the European Commission to show that a growing community of people is looking for a change of food policies towards a more sustainable, healthy and fair model. Your contribution has the power to concretely demonstrate that people strongly wish for a change and therefore show the Commission how urgent and important it is to publish the Communication on Building a Sustainable European Food System that echoes the call coming from a broad citizens' movement.

To make this community of active citizens clearly visible to the Commission: 'Join the Food Revolution!'. Sign up to the Charter and register online to share your actions in favour of reform.

If as farmer, fisherman, food professional, organisation or citizen, you support, manage or are part of a project that works at promoting improvements to the current food system, this tool encourages you to put your name forward to be added to the ‘Join the Food Revolution’ community!

The project you support does not have to be enormous or spectacular. A Food Revolutionary should be someone who works at improving the food system whether at local, national or multinational level. Everyone can be part of the change in the food system.

Your participation in this collective uprising can be a strong incentive to the European Commission to bring about the publication of an important piece of work, which would serve to provide European policymakers and legislators with the necessary 'food for thought' needed for European food policy to become genuinely sustainable.

The publication of the Communication on Building a Sustainable European Food System would represent a huge, forward-thinking step by the European Commission. Committed members of the European Parliament and citizens wish the Commission to hear the loud call for a change of the Food systems and ask for the publication of the Communication on Building a Sustainable European Food System not to be delayed any further.

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