"Towards sustainable food consumption": Scientific Opinion

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Towards sustainable food consumption

Scoping question

What tools could be used at EU level, in addition to those mentioned in the 2020 Farm to Fork Strategy, to overcome the barriers preventing consumers to adopt sustainable and healthy diets?
Coordinate the adoption of a **coherent mix of complementary policies** that include instruments addressing incentives and disincentives, information on healthy and sustainable food, and regulatory measures.
Towards sustainable food consumption: Recommendation 0

- Develop a long-term vision on healthy and sustainable diets that is shared by all supply-chain actors who influence the food environment, and make these actors accountable.

- Ensure coherence between different interventions that influence the food system and remove conflicting interventions.

- Ensure high-level policy coordination by developing communication channels, sustained dialogues and a harmonised governance system.

- Monitor responses to new policies by food processors and retailers in order to anticipate any unintended effects of policy interventions.
Make healthy and sustainable diets the **easy and affordable** choice.
Towards sustainable food consumption: Recommendation 1

- Identify the optimal fiscal mechanisms to progressively introduce taxes on products whose frequent consumption is unhealthy and unsustainable, with appropriate communication and evaluation measures.

- Make healthy and sustainable diets more affordable.

- Adjust subsidy schemes for production systems with low environmental performances, where needed.

- Address the root causes of poor nutrition with social policies aimed at eradicating poverty and investing in better education for all.
Secure the provision of adequate and trusted information about the environmental and health impacts of different foods in order to encourage healthy and sustainable decision-making by all actors in the food system.
Towards sustainable food consumption: Recommendation 2

• Generalise the inclusion of sustainability criteria in national dietary guidelines.

• Define and communicate EU-wide and national-scale time-bound goals for healthy and sustainable consumption.

• Develop both information campaigns to raise consumer awareness about health and the sustainability impact of diets and education programmes to improve food literacy.

• Encourage consumers to establish more direct connections with primary food producers in order to increase food literacy.
Towards sustainable food consumption: Recommendation 2

- Make better use of the potential of the digital food environment to inform consumers about healthy and sustainable diets and to reduce food waste.

- Restrict advertising for food products and drinks whose frequent consumption is unhealthy and unsustainable.

- Engage with all food-system actors in a transparent manner and give an equal voice to all stakeholders in order to obtain healthy and sustainable diets and to overcome expected opposition from some food industry actors to some policy measures.
Mandate new interventions to promote the availability and accessibility of products for healthy and sustainable diets.
Towards sustainable food consumption: Recommendation 3

- Encourage Member States to regulate the placement in retail outlets of products whose frequent consumption is unhealthy and unsustainable.

- Require food product reformulation in order to increase availability of healthy and sustainable food.

- Restrict EU imports of food commodities from places where food production causes major environmental damage, either by border taxes or by bans.
Thank you