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A magnifying glass with a black handle and a silver rim is positioned over the words "SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE" in a bold, orange font. The magnifying glass is tilted, and its lens is focused on the text. The background is a dark blue/black gradient with various white and light blue words scattered around.

“Towards sustainable food consumption”: Scientific Opinion

Group of Chief Scientific Advisers to the EC

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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?**

Towards sustainable food consumption: Recommendation 0

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.

Towards sustainable food consumption: Recommendation 1

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.

Towards sustainable food consumption: Recommendation 2

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.

Towards sustainable food consumption: Recommendation 3

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



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