Alton Sustainable Eating

Healthy Food, Healthy Planet

Biodiversity Loss & Getting to the Plate of the Matter – We are all in for a big shock!

By Dee Panes, ACAN's consultant on Sustainable Eating

Our global food system is the primary driver of biodiversity loss, with agriculture alone being the identified threat to 24,000 of the 28,000 (86%) species at risk of extinction. The global rate of species extinction today is higher than the average rate over the past 10 million years.

In the UK, it is estimated that 85% of the land that is used for agriculture is just for animals, which is almost 50% of the entire land mass of the UK.

The livestock sector emerges as one of the top two or three most significant contributors to the most serious environmental problems, at every scale from local to global.

Yep!
Read on …

Back in 2006 the United Nations stated, the livestock sector emerges as one of the top two or three most significant contributors to the most serious environmental problems at every scale, from local to global. The findings of this report suggests that it should be a major policy focus when dealing with problems of land degradation, climate change and air pollution, water shortage and water pollution, and the loss of biodiversity. And then four years later they warned that a global shift towards a plant-based diet is vital to save the world from hunger, fuel poverty and the worst impacts of climate change.

So why exactly is animal farming bad for the environment?

1. Globally, 26% of all the world's ice-free land surface is given to grazing animals. And in total animal agriculture use is 83% of all agricultural land yet it provides less than 20% of the calories consumed and less than 40% of the protein that is consumed.

2. In the UK, it is estimated that 85% of the land that is used for agriculture is just for animals which is almost 50% of the entire land mass of the UK.

3. And in the US, 41% of the entire land mass is for animal farming compared to 4% which is used to grow plants directly for humans, with half of all agricultural land in the US being used specifically for beef production even though it only makes up 3% of dietary calories.

4. Animal farming is the leading cause of rain-forest deforestation, the single largest driver of habitat loss in general in agriculture which also includes the farming of fish and is listed as being a threat to 24,000 of the 28,000 species that are currently threatened with extinction.

5. And when it comes to the Brazilian Amazon specifically, cattle ranching is reportedly responsible for 80% of rain-forest loss.

The evidence?

🔥🔥An investigation in 2019 showed that fires in the Amazon were three times more common in areas where there is cattle ranching.

🌱🌱When it comes to soy, about 75% of all the soy that is produced is used for animal feeds with only 6% of whole soybeans that are produced being used to produce plant-based products like tofu, soy milk, and other plant-based alternatives.

💨💨When it comes to emissions, a University of Oxford report stated that, even if fossil fuel emissions were eliminated immediately the emissions produced by the agriculture sector alone would make it impossible to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius and would even make it difficult to not hit 2 degrees.

So, what does this mean for everyone today?

It means that changes to our food system are essential if we want to avoid making the more extreme heat waves, water scarcities, droughts and food shortages for hundreds of millions more people forcing them to be climate refugees. And it's essential if we want to avoid the demise of the world's biodiversity, increasing rates of dead zones and species extinction, the disappearance of coral reefs and rising sea levels causing the flooding of major cities such as Mumbai, Shanghai, Miami, and New York, with the potential for islands in the south Pacific Ocean to disappear completely.

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>>>>>>>>SWITCHING TO A PLANT BASED DIET<<<<<<<<

could reduce agricultural emissions by as much as 73% in high-income nations. And a study that analysed 313 different potential food systems, discovered that the highest greenhouse gas emissions were found in the food systems that included a high meat demand especially focused on ruminant, meat and milk whilst the lowest emissions came from the plant-based diets.

If you would like further information about transitioning your diet to a plant predominant and/or exclusive diet, please contact ACAN by email altonclimatenetwork@gmail.com

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