

Joint Statement at 27th May 2016 at 10am
On Sustainable Consumption and Production

Kia ora, good morning,

My name is Emily Rushton and I am speaking on behalf of the Major Group of Children & Youth and supported by the Farmers Major Group.

We appreciate that all countries have accepted the detrimental role that current consumption and production patterns of food have on health and the environment. Tackling these issues simultaneously, from all areas of the globe, will be much more productive.

We are concerned about some weak language in the text and would like to stress the importance of action on these issues, such as unsustainable animal agriculture.

Animal agriculture is one of the worst industries for impacts on the environment. Animal products have been linked to many health issues like multiple cancers, strokes, dementia, cardio-vascular disease and obesity, which are many of the health crises the Global North is struggling with currently.

The Global South suffers hugely as well. Forests burn that are sinking carbon in order to grow ever increasing monocrops for animals, one of the largest emissions producers. This large scale production, is hugely detrimental for environments, communities and biodiversity. Small-hold farmers are suffering from increasing corporate market domination. A system that wastes food, land and resources.

Our escalating consumption of animal products has arguably the most impact on the environment, polluting water systems and aquifers, creating massive species loss from deforestation and ocean dead zones and almost 1/5th of all emissions worldwide.

We didn't use to eat this way. In terms of our history, this is a recent change and one that can be reversed. Cultures morph and adapt. We just need it framed the right way.

As leaders we need to use a positive approach to facilitate what is best for our society and world. Make healthy consumption cool.

Farmers need to have education on alternatives and support to diversify. We need to empower small-hold, community based initiatives and support the markets that will develop around them.

We strongly believe the word 'shifting' needs to be used in paragraph 3, 9 and 11 as well as in the operative 1, 2 instead of the much weaker proposed options. And similarly the other parts of operative part with like types of text.

This acknowledges that we cannot continue with business as usual and a transition must be actively started.

Because young people and farmers want a future, and the destruction that our current agricultural practices cause are not a real 'choice' when you look at what you are choosing.

Thank you