

The elephant in the room is really a cow: using consumption corridors to define sustainable meat consumption in the European Union

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Implementing the European Green Deal requires a consistent food systems' policy that involves not only targeting the supply side but also conducting extensive changes in diets at the consumer level. Reducing meat consumption is an obvious strategy to put the European food system on track to meet the Green Deal's goals. This cannot be achieved by focusing solely on consumer choice and individual responsibility. Stronger governance is required to reduce the scale of meat consumption to sustainable levels. Such governance needs to be informed by a holistic definition of "sustainable meat consumption", designed to ensure that important sustainability priorities are not neglected, and to account for all emissions associated with EU consumption, regardless of where production takes place. This article presents a conceptual framework to define "sustainable meat consumption" based on the concept of consumption corridors (CCs). A CC is the space between a minimum (the floor) and maximum (the ceiling) consumption level, which allows everybody to satisfy their needs without compromising others' ability to meet their own. Embedded in a powerful set of principles (recognizing universal needs; tackling both over and under-consumption; framing food as a common good; promoting public participation; and addressing environmental justice and planetary sustainability), CCs are attuned to the Green Deal's ambition to "leave no one behind", in the EU and beyond. CCs provide a demand-side solution encompassing a more equitable alternative to discuss what is actually a "fair share" of the world's limited resources when it comes to meat consumption.