



# SCORAI-ERSCP-WUR Conference

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Transforming Consumption-Production  
Systems Toward Just and Sustainable Futures



# BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

SCP23 is organized jointly by  
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# About this document

Welcome to the abstract book for the SCP23 conference! This document serves as a comprehensive documentation of the intellectual contributions shared by our esteemed authors. It aims to provide guidance to conference delegates, allowing them to plan their own program and connect with relevant colleagues. We also want to encourage conference participants to explore the SCP23 OSF repository where full conference papers are published ([osf.io/meetings/SCP23](https://osf.io/meetings/SCP23)). We would like to emphasize that all rights regarding the intellectual contributions remain with the authors.

Please note that while we have endeavored to present an accurate schedule, changes may still occur. These changes could be due to unforeseen circumstances such as late cancellations or adjustments in chairs or rooms. We strongly encourage you to stay updated by following the conference communication on our website ([www.scp-conference-2023.com](http://www.scp-conference-2023.com)), on-site notices, email updates, and our social media channels. For any inquiries or assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to the conference organizers at [contact@scp-conference-2023.com](mailto:contact@scp-conference-2023.com).

Wishing you a wonderful conference filled with insightful discussions and fruitful connections!

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## What does it mean to replace meat? Cross-cultural meat practices and their implications for a protein transition

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Conventional sources of animal-based protein, such as meat and milk, are damaging planetary and public health. In this context, Western food system actors are calling for a 'protein transition' from animal-based to plant-based protein. A significant area of societal and scientific interest in this direction is the development of meat analogues. These plant-based products – designed to closely simulate conventional meat-based equivalents – are intended to easily replace meat, fitting seamlessly into people's established menus and consumption patterns in place of animal-based foods. Indeed, among certain (wealthy, educated) people in certain (urban, Western) places, meat analogues have been relatively successful. But will this mode of meat replacement work elsewhere, on a larger scale?

This paper argues that replacing 'meat' is not simply a question of substituting one thing for another. Rather, it entails a wholesale reconfiguration of a constellation of food provisioning and consumption practices, as well as their attendant sociotechnical architectures. Consequently, culturally-specific approaches to achieving a 'protein transition' cannot be transposed across contexts.

The paper is based on an exploration of meat-related food practices in Western Europe and Southeast Asia, drawing on qualitative fieldwork and existing research literatures. With consumption as a broad focus, we first elaborate what constitutes 'meat' in the West and how this has arisen. We explain how Western 'meat replacement' is inextricably connected to the thing it replaces, reflecting how meat is 'uncoupled' from its relations of production. Contrasting this with Asia, where meat is 'coupled' to its constitutive practices, we highlight the incompatibility of meat analogues in contexts where meat is a 'lively' commodity. Consequently, we argue that the use of meat analogues to achieve a protein transition is limited in its cultural-geographic applicability. Further, we suggest that debates on food system transformation might profitably conceptualise 'meat' not as a product, but as a practice.