



Slow Food®

What You Should Know About **Slow Food's** Global Campaign 2017



Slow Food offers

**positive solutions
to climate change**



In the last hundred years there has been a 0.85°C increase in the average temperature of the Earth's surface, sea levels have risen as well as the temperature and acidity of the oceans, the Arctic is warming up even more rapidly than predicted, and extreme climate events and disruptions to the life cycles of animal and plant species are becoming more and more common.

According to IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), by the end of the century, if greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced, the average temperature of the Earth could rise as much as 4°C, but even with an increase of only 2°C there would be extremely serious consequences, both environmental and social.

Slow Food believes that food production represents one of the principle causes of climate change, of which it is also a victim. As such, a substantial change in the current global food system will make a difference in the fight against climate change.

The model of food production which has been established globally since the end of the Second World War is marked by an intense and growing industrialization, with the following characteristics:

- the growing use of chemical products and petroleum derivatives for the production of fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and fuel for agricultural machinery
- the spread of monocultures, high-yield seeds and genetically-modified plants together with the abandonment of practices aimed at conserving the natural fertility of the land (crop rotation, green manure, intercropping)
- the intensified mechanization of agricultural processes
- the excessive consumption of water for irrigation

The environmental impact of the industrialization of agriculture has been devastating, bringing with it pollution, soil erosion and salinization, damage to agrarian landscapes, the construction of dams, barriers

and huge diversions of water flows, the loss of vegetable and animal biodiversity caused both by deforestation and the abandonment of traditional native varieties.

Animal breeding has also changed substantially in recent decades in order to satisfy growing demand, thereby creating one of the most serious environmental problems we face. We mustn't forget that animal breeding occupies 70% of arable land (including both the land used to raise the animals and the crops grown exclusively to feed them).

Meat production is responsible for almost a fifth of total greenhouse gas emissions (including deforestation to create farmland to raise livestock and the crops to feed them, the use of fertilizers and the emission of methane and nitrous oxide), and the agricultural sector as a whole for around a third.

Further consequences include the general impoverishment of global culture, as traditional knowledge linked to cultivation and food production is lost, the economic ruin of small-scale producers across the world, increased poverty, the intensification of conflicts over natural resources (like water) and strong migratory flows.

The industrialization of agriculture and animal breeding as well as the unsustainable nature of modern food consumption that derives from the industrialization of its production are some of the main agents which threaten our environment.

The present food system must be radically redrawn, if we want to reduce our impact on the environment.

The adoption of sustainable agricultural practices can have an important role in the struggle against climate change. Sustainable agriculture reduces our dependence on fossil fuels, preserves the fertility of the land, increases carbon capture in the soil, slows down desertification and uses less water, but more efficiently. The conservation of biodiversity guarantees the possibility to cultivate or raise livestock in difficult territories and better resist parasites and diseases.

Slow Food promotes:

the adoption of agroecological practices

that avoid pesticides, herbicides and chemical fertilizers, as well as the use of alternative, renewable sources for energy production.



the end of intensive production methods.

It is important to reduce meat consumption and support small and medium-scale agriculture and extensive breeding that is respectful of animal welfare.

the cultivation of local vegetable varieties and animal breeds,

which are more resistant and adaptive to different productive contexts. The rejection of genetically-modified crops.

traditional knowledge:

Its conservation, transmission and application in the field.

the adoption of a new agricultural model for Europe,

through a reform of the Common Agricultural Policy which safeguards the environment and supports small and medium-scale producers.

shorter value chains

that allow for a drastic reduction in emissions, and solutions that establish a direct relationship between producers and consumers. The average distance that food travels before being consumed has doubled in the last 30 years, with an associated rise in the consumption of fuel and related pollution.

