

NGO urges leaders in COP27 to discuss plant-based treaty

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Cairo, November 13 (RHC)-- An NGO and climate activists have called on world leaders attending this year's COP27 climate summit in Egypt to start negotiations for a "plant-based treaty." An open letter

signed by celebrities, politicians, and businesses was delivered to COP27 President Sameh Shoukry, calling for “a broad, holistic approach to a sustainable and just plant-based food transition through a global Plant Based Treaty this decade to avert climate catastrophe.”

The treaty outlined three core principles; to stop the expansion of animal agriculture, promote a shift to sustainable plant-based diets, and “reforest and rewild” planet Earth. Food production accounts for approximately a third of global greenhouse gas emissions and is the main threat to 86 percent of the world’s species at risk of extinction, while cattle ranching is responsible for three-quarters of Amazon rainforest loss.

Livestock accounts for nearly a third of the global methane emissions linked to human activity, released in the form of cattle burps, manure and the cultivation of feed crops. According to the letter, fossil fuels and animal agriculture are the main driving forces behind global warming and climate change issues. The group said the three main greenhouse gases are at “devastatingly high levels and rapidly accelerating.”

The signatories hoped to bring the issue of a transition to plant-based food production to the forefront of food insecurity and the climate agenda. They also hoped that world leaders would start negotiations for the treaty on COP27’s Agriculture and Adaptation Day on November 12th.

“A step in the right direction would be an acknowledgement of the wastefulness of the animal industries of the Global North and their massively negative implications on food security all over the world,” Plant Based Treaty campaigner Maximilian Weiss, told Al Jazeera.

While the issue is becoming more mainstream in some regions such as the United Kingdom, Weiss said more is needed to be done using a “bottom-up” approach to pressure governments into including plant-based solutions in climate actions plans.

“We’re on the highway to climate hell with a methane-emitting meat burger in one hand and our foot on the fossil fuel gas pedal. It’s time for a plant-based food and renewable energy revolution,” said Anita Krajnc, Plant Based Treaty global campaign coordinator. “It is high time for decision-makers in the climate debate to stop overlooking the impact of animal production. We no longer have time to explain the links between animal agriculture, human rights, biodiversity, natural resources, and environmental protection,” said Anna Spurek, chief operating officer of Green Rev Institute. “COP27 should be the moment to endorse the Plant Based Treaty and decide on a just transition of the global food system.”

Some of the measures to transition to a plant-based food system is making such food the default option in all public hospitals, schools, nursing homes, prisons and public institutions, the letter said. According to the Plant Based Treaty organisers, the letter has been endorsed by more than 60,000 individuals and 2,000 groups and businesses. Among their main objectives is a “global agreement alongside action at all levels.”

Earlier this week, a senior executive at the UN food agency told the Reuters news agency that the body aims to launch a plan within the year to make the world’s food system more sustainable.

Speaking to Reuters news agency on the sidelines of COP27, Food and Agriculture Organization Deputy Director Zitouni Ould-Dada said the plan would show how the food industry and farming can align with the world’s goal of capping global warming at 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 F).



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