

## Addressing Global Warming through reducing meat consumption

By : Vijai Singhal.

An Open letter to MPs and Senators.

3<sup>rd</sup> December, 2018

Dear Senators and MPs,

As you already know, addressing Climate Change is the most important issue for humanity. The recent results of the Victorian State elections have clearly proved that Australian people want positive action on climate change. It has already resulted in the dethroning of the past four Prime Ministers in Australia.

Hindu Council of Australia has been very actively involved in addressing this issue mainly from the point of view of reducing meat consumption, which is the most effective things people can do to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and ensure food availability for the poor, as well as extending the values of respect and compassion for animals and is good for our own health. Hindu Council had launched its "Meat Free Day" campaign on 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2008 – on Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday. We are now celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Mahatma Gandhi's 150<sup>th</sup> year of his birthday.

You know that as per UN FAO report: "Livestock's Long Shadow", animal-farming contributes more greenhouse gases (in CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents) than of all forms of transportation worldwide (18% vs. 13.5%). Under a business as usual scenario, the number of animals farmed worldwide is projected to double by 2050. The resulting greenhouse gas emissions would negate reductions from other positive changes (e.g. increasing automobile fuel efficiencies, switching to renewable energy etc). It is therefore necessary to take positive action to reduce meat consumption. This aspect of the problem is not getting the attention it deserves. At long last the recent IPCC report did emphasise the need to move to plant-based diet, improved farming practices and reduction in food wastage as being necessary to limit the GHG emissions.

It is also a big health issue, as you know WHO had released a report on 26 Oct 2015 that says that if you eat as much as 50 grams of processed meat (the equivalent of a few slices of bacon) every day – or a total of 350 grams a week – your risk of colon cancer goes up by 18 percent. Our average consumption is far too high. The resulting increase in health budget is becoming a big problem for the national government to balance its books as well. Moderating our consumption of meat and dairy products will lower the incidence of obesity, ischaemic heart disease and stroke, while cutting consumption of processed meat will reduce the incidence of colorectal cancers, resulting in the saving of billions of dollars in health budget.

We look forward to the support from Greens to highlight this issue as it effects so many aspects of our living.

Vijai Singhal

Director, Hindu Council of Australia

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