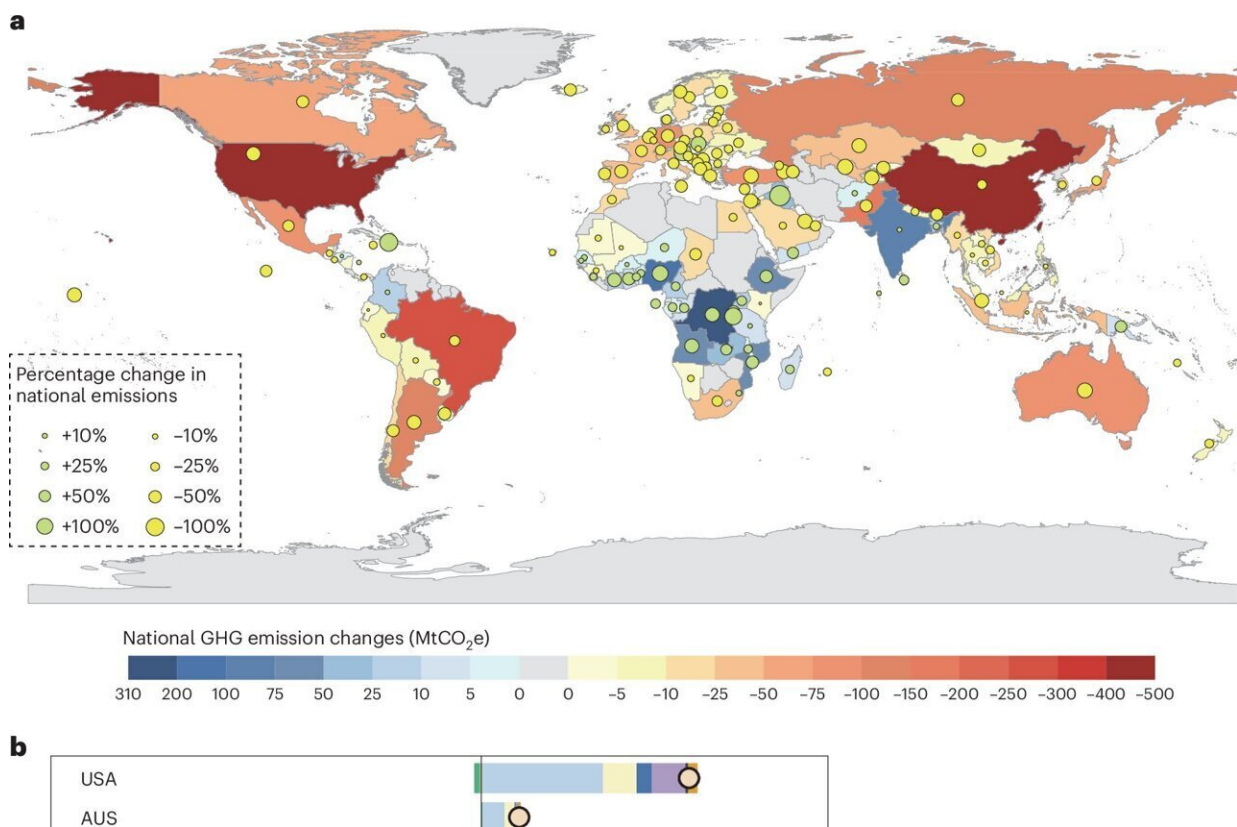


# Planetary health diet adoption would reduce emissions by 17%, environmental scientists suggest

August 14 2024, by Bob Yirka



Changes in dietary emissions for adopting the planetary health diet in countries and regions. Credit: *Nature Climate Change* (2024). DOI: 10.1038/s41558-024-02084-1

A report by a multi-institutional team of environmental scientists suggests that if everyone in the world adopted the EAT-Lancet planetary health diet, global dietary greenhouse gas emissions would drop by 17%.

In their study, [published](#) in the journal *Nature Climate Change*, the group analyzed the distribution of emissions associated with 140 [food products](#) consumed in 139 countries.

Prior research has shown that diets rich in animal and trans fats can lead to health problems such as [heart disease](#), and that animal farming produces more greenhouse gases than vegetable gardening. So [medical researchers](#) and environmentalists have been advising adults to consume less meat and more vegetables.

In this new study, the researchers quantified the benefits the planet would receive if everyone heeded that advice. They also looked at the disparity that exists between consumption habits between countries and what could be done to improve the global dietary emission outlook.

The researchers analyzed data regarding food consumption habits from 139 countries as a means to compare greenhouse gas emissions due to food production among those same countries. To make the job more manageable, they narrowed down the food products to just 140.

As part of their analysis, they found that 56.9% of the global population engages in what they describe as overconsuming—meat and dairy make up too much of their diet. They noted that if all these over-consumers switched to the EAT-Lancet planetary health diet, [global greenhouse gas emissions](#) related to food production could be reduced 32.4%.

The EAT-Lancet planetary health diet is a diet developed by the EAT-Lancet Commission back in 2019. It was designed to create a global paradigm in which food production could meet the demands of 10

billion people by the year 2050 to reduce deaths due to hunger and [poor diet](#) and to prevent the collapse of the natural world.

The diet is similar to a [vegetarian diet](#), but allows small amounts of dairy and animal protein products such as fish, eggs and meat. The research team also notes that western countries, which are the biggest meat eaters, would need to make the biggest changes.

**More information:** Yanxian Li et al, Reducing climate change impacts from the global food system through diet shifts, *Nature Climate Change* (2024). [DOI: 10.1038/s41558-024-02084-1](https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-024-02084-1)

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