



WWF for a living planet

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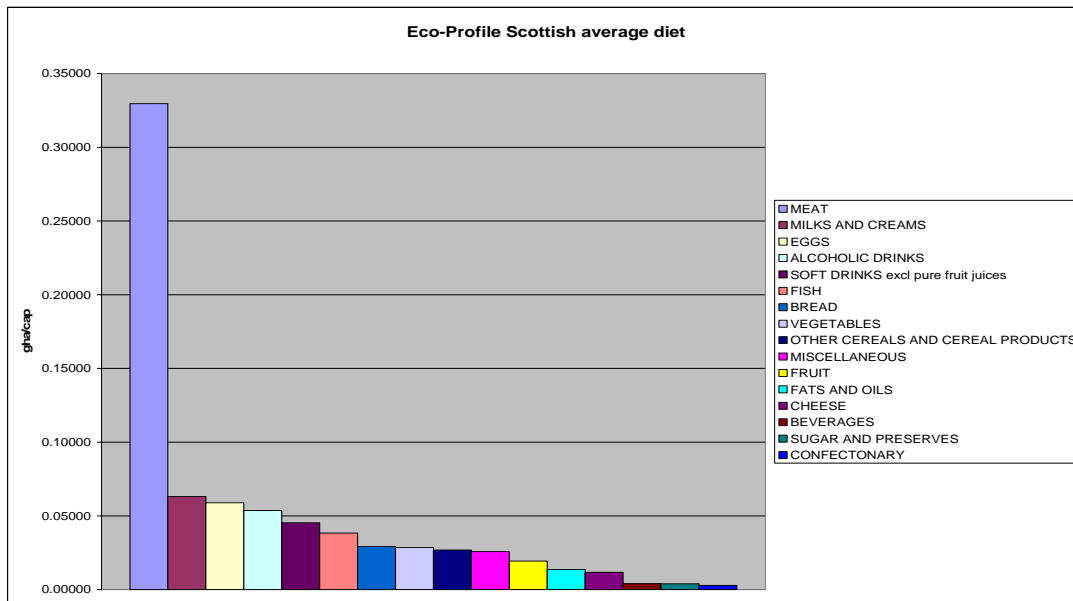
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## Parliamentary briefing

# One Planet Living: Food

Every individual, every household, every business and, ultimately, every country consumes resources. The amount of resources we use to support our lifestyles can be measured, and is known as our **Ecological Footprint**. In Scotland, our footprint measures up at an average of 5.37 global ha<sup>1</sup>. The problem is that if everyone had this lifestyle, we would need three planets to survive. The solution is to move towards One Planet Living. **Our food consumption makes up 20% of our footprint.**

Research for WWF Scotland by the Stockholm Environment Institute has explored the Footprint of the average Scottish diet. It shows that meat, then dairy and eggs, are by far the biggest contributors to our food Footprint. This is because of the land area put over to grazing but also the land, fertiliser, water and energy used to grow grains like wheat in the UK and soy in South America to feed to animals. On average everyone in the UK has a 'soy' footprint of 400 square meters in Latin America just to produce feed for the meat we eat.



Yet by following the dietary recommendations within the Scottish Diet Action Plan we could reduce average food Footprint by as much as 25%. Individuals can go even further by cutting back on meat and dairy foods, choosing to eat locally, fresh rather than processed convenience foods and choosing organic produce.

Beyond Footprint, the food industry can also have global impacts that bring about loss of habitats and wildlife, generation of climate change gases, overuse of water and resources and over exploitation of fisheries. That is why WWF has instigated with industry a range of standard setting and certification systems that covers fisheries with the Marine Stewardship Council, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, the Roundtable on Responsible Soya and the Better Sugar Initiative.



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Printed on recycled paper

### **Three actions that government could take to reduce Scotland's food Footprint:**

1. Put into action public procurement policies that deliver good nutritional and sustainability standards.
2. Promote and support the certification of sustainable food chains. In Scotland a first step should be to aid certification of Scottish fisheries to Marine Stewardship Council standards.
3. Design rural policies to direct support to local, seasonal, fresh, organic food production, processing and promotion in Scotland.

**1.** The public sector spends £85 million a year on food for schools, hospitals and services. Guidance on public procurement of food and catering services clearly states that this procurement must drive wider sustainable development. It has been demonstrated that better nutritional standards can correlate with better sustainability standards. Our Footprint studies show that nutritional standards for school meals have reduced the Footprint in North Lanarkshire schools by more than 40%. Building on the *Hungry for Success* initiative, the Schools (Nutrition and Health Promotion) Bill aims to secure in statute improved nutritional standards for school meals. As these go hand in hand, this presents a golden opportunity to score a double win by securing sustainability standards in statute too. This would ensure that the £45 million spent a year on school meals doesn't damage the environment but contributes to education for sustainability in schools and sets children on a course of eating for their own well being and a living planet.

**2.** There are initiatives that address specific production issues. The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) fish certification, the blue tick, can reassure the consumer that the fish they are buying is from a sustainable source while the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil certification for palm oil confirms that this oil has been produced to acceptable sustainability standards. In Scotland, we should be working to make sure that Scottish fisheries that reach these standards are identified and can be marketed with the mark of a sustainable source. The Principles of the MSC Standard are: **Principle 1:** The condition of the fish stocks - *if there are enough fish to ensure that the fishery is sustainable.* **Principle 2:** The impact of the fishery on the marine environment - *the effect that fishing has on the immediate marine environment including other non-target fish species, marine mammals and seabirds.* **Principle 3:** The fishery management systems - *the rules and procedures that are in place, as well as how they are implemented, to maintain a sustainable fishery and to ensure that impact on the marine environment is minimised.*<sup>1</sup>

**3.** The Scottish Executive supports Scottish farming with £500 million a year. The nature of this support, and the history of the Common Agriculture Policy, means the Scottish farming sector is producing a minimal variety of basic commodities in an attempt to compete with global markets. It can be difficult for communities to buy local food because there are no longer local abattoirs and dairies let alone farms growing a range of produce diverse enough to provide a balanced diet. Scottish farming must aim to supply affordable, healthy, fresh, seasonal food produced sustainably and locally, but the Scottish Executive is not directing public support to the sector in that direction.

The Scottish Rural Development Programme for 2007-13 is currently being developed and offers opportunities to invest in more sustainable food economies. It must fulfil Scottish Executive commitments to sustainable food and include more support for local processing, the organic food chain and diverse ways of marketing such as farm shops, local box schemes and community supported agriculture. Investments should support development of more sustainable food economies which will reduce food miles and improve access to healthy diets for otherwise excluded communities.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://eng.msc.org/>