



* Glossary

Issue: an important topic or problem for debate or discussion

Jeopardize: to put at risk

Shrink: to become or make smaller in size or amount



Sustainable food consumption and production

Food consumption and production trends are among the main causes of **strain** on the environment. Fundamental changes in the ways food is produced, processed, transported and consumed are indispensable for achieving sustainable development.

Sustainable consumption and production in food and agriculture is a consumer-driven, holistic concept that refers to the integrated implementation of sustainable patterns of food consumption and production, while at the same time respecting the ability of a natural ecosystem to support it. It requires consideration of all the parts of and phases in the life of a product, from production to consumption. It includes such **issues** as sustainable lifestyles, sustainable diets, food losses and food waste management. It also comprises recycling, voluntary sustainability standards, and environmentally friendly behaviours and methods that minimize adverse impacts on the environment and do not **jeopardize** the needs of present and future generations. Sustainability, climate change, biodiversity, water, food and nutrition security, right to food and diets are all closely connected.

Agri-food systems develop within a finite and sometimes **shrinking** resource base. They therefore need to make use of natural resources in ways that are environmentally, economically, socially and culturally sustainable to preserve the ecosystem. Growth of agri-food systems must be inclusive, it must target objectives beyond production and must promote sustainable practices and diets.

Consumer choice plays a leading role in orienting production, as consumers select certain types of product according to place of origin, production processes or producer. Consumers also exert strong influences through the ways they buy, transport, conserve, cook and consume their food. Food consumption is affected by a wide range of factors, including food availability and food choice, which may in turn be influenced by geography, demography, disposable income, socio-economic status, urbanization, globalization, religion, culture, marketing and consumer attitudes.

(Adapted from: *Sustainable Food Consumption and Production*, www.fao.org, 2012)





Understanding the text

1. Read the text and find word associations which mean much the same as the following.

- 1. Tendenze nel consumo e produzione del cibo:
- 2. Cause principali:
- 3. Cambiamenti fondamentali:
- 4. Concetto olistico:
- 5. Impatto dannoso:
- 6. Cambiamento climatico:
- 7. Risorse naturali:
- 8. Scelta del consumatore:

2. Just looking at the word associations from the previous exercise write at least three sentences about the concepts contained in the text.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

3. Read the paragraphs and decide which best express the concepts contained in the text. Rate them from 1 to 3 (1 = not related, 2 = related, 3 = very related).

- 1. CO₂ emissions have been rising steadily: since 1751 approximately 329 billion tons of carbon have been released to the atmosphere from the consumption of fossil fuels and cement production. Half of these emissions have taken place since the mid 1970s.
- 2. Though there are controversies around the way pressures on the planet's resources are measured, the message that consistently emerges is that the global economy is consuming resources at increasing and unsustainable rates.
- 3. As ecological reserves become increasingly rare, it will become critical to forge new relationships between countries and move toward policies that protect natural assets while improving health and well-being. In this game, everyone can win. Every single person will benefit from early action.
- 4. Consumers in developed countries and wealthy consumers everywhere will need to take the lead in moving towards sustainable patterns of consumption. Production systems also need to move towards sustainable patterns in the management of resources with reduced pollution and waste.
- 5. Without a fundamental shift in the way goods and resources are consumed, the world faces the prospect of multiple, interlocking global crises which will have grave consequences for the environment, prosperity and security. Sustainable consumption is a prerequisite for a more prosperous, safe and equitable global future.
- 6. Water covers 70% of our planet, and it is easy to think that it will always be plentiful. However, freshwater – the stuff we drink, bathe in, irrigate our farm fields with – is incredibly rare. Only 3% of the world's water is freshwater, and two-thirds of that is tucked away in frozen glaciers or otherwise unavailable for our use.