

FOOD SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

FOOD, PEOPLE, PLANET: A GLOBAL OUTLOOK

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JANUARY - MARCH



CLIMATE CHANGES AND FAMINE: ISSUES AT THE HEART OF INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS



THE FOOD TOPICS CLOUD



TOTAL MENTIONS

21.651

UNIQUE AUTHOR

6.066

From January to March 2017, we found more than 20,000 mentions about food, nutrition and sustainability published on news websites belonging to four areas of analysis: media; legislation; international agencies & NGOs; and research. The impressive total confirms the importance of food as a topic of interest in the media and at various institutions.

The cloud created from the study offers an immediate understanding of where attention is focused, with **3 topic "clusters"** emerging in the first quarter of 2017: **climate change**, starting with global warming; the arrival of the **Trump administration** in the United States; and the risk of **famine** affecting tens of thousands of people, especially in eastern Africa.

The first two topics are connected. As participants predicted in mid-January during the 46th edition of the World Economic Forum in Davos, the new President of the United States of America sharply broke from the environmental policies established by his predecessor, Barack Obama. The new U.S. President's stance was the catalyst for a "revamping" of the debate surrounding global warming, which also brought more attention to the first legal actions taken by the new American administration.

The third theme, the risk of famine, has been given a significant amount of space as a result of its intensity. This phenomenon is one which the governments of hunger-stricken states are facing alongside other nations around the globe, responding with a notable humanitarian effort, and important international agencies, starting with the FAO. On this topic, **Hilal Elver**, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, stated: "Armed conflict, coupled with an economic crisis, high food prices, debilitated agricultural production, and in some cases the severe impact of drought and extreme weather caused by climate change, has resulted in millions of people going hungry in Syria, Yemen, South Sudan, Nigeria and Somalia, to name a few countries. Deliberate blocking of food and water from civilians is a crime against humanity but there is impunity. We need a legally binding global agreement to remind us of the international community's responsibility to protect, already part of the UN charter. Unfortunately, the question of how to eliminate hunger and even famine and protect the right to food for all in the context of grave humanitarian situations is still an urgent matter in the 21st century. This is a critical question, which merits the immediate attention of the international community." **Danielle Nierenberg**, Food Tank President and founder, and a member of the BCFN Foundation Advisory Board, places the phenomenon in a broader and even more alarming context: "Despite the increase in cultivated surface area and agricultural production, with all the negative consequences and impact on the environment deriving from industrial food production, every year 36 million people die from malnutrition and starvation, and the problem of hunger is far from being resolved." That fact is further confirmed by the findings of the Food Sustainability Index which, in the words of Nierenberg, "demonstrates how there are still vast areas for improvement on this topic across many parts of the planet".

"20 million people", said **Livia Pomodoro**, President of the Milan Center for Food Law and Policy, "are facing the worst famine the world has ever seen since the United Nations was founded. It's a political and moral defeat, as the world should have immediately provided the financial support necessary to respond to and win this crisis. If each human being has the right to adequate food, each nation has the obligation to do its part in the war against hunger. If food is a right for each of us", Pomodoro emphasised, "defeating hunger is a moral duty that an unwritten convention imposes on all the world's nations".

THE **FOOD SUSTAINABILITY INDEX** DEMONSTRATES EXCTLY HOW FAR-REACHING THE RISK OF FAMINE AND HUNGER ACROSS PLANET: IN AFRICA AND BEYOND.

The last five countries in the index relative to the 'Prevalence of Under- and Malnourishment' indicator (on a scale from 0 - 100, when zero correspond to the greatest risk):

INDIA **15.56**
ETHIOPIA **28.71**
INDONESIA **50.51**
NIGERIA **60.00**
EGYPT **72.93**

TO SEE ALL THE DATA [CLICK HERE](#)



ANALYSIS / Text analysis of the themes in focus

HOT TOPICS

- > **CLIMATE CHANGE: GLOBAL WARMING, TRUMP ADMINISTRATION, PARIS ACCORD**
 - > **FOOD SECURITY: FAMINE EMERGENCY, WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME, BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION**
 - > **FOOD SAFETY: EATING HABITS, BRAZILIAN MEAT IMPORT BAN, EFSA ACTIVITY**
-



MEDIA

MOTHERJONES.COM

[Trump just released his plan to gut Obama's climate policies](#)

The wide-ranging order, which will be accompanied by other environmental directives, targets Obama-era policies across the government, including in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Interior, and the Department of Defense. It directs the EPA to revisit the Clean Power Plan, which limits carbon pollution from power plants and was considered the centerpiece of former President Barack Obama's climate policy.

EURACTIV.COM

[Smart farming hinges on e-skills and rural internet access](#)

The digitalisation of agriculture could help Europe address food security and environmental issues at the same time. But realising this vision will require e-skills, proper broadband infrastructure and big data management, experts warn. The discussion on the post-2020 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has already begun and it seems digital farming will take centre stage in the new framework.

HUFFINGTONPOST.COM

[U.N. Expert: biodiversity is essential to human rights](#)

For the first time, a United Nations report has recognized biodiversity and healthy ecosystems as essential to human rights. The report, authored by U.N. Special Rapporteur John Knox, a human rights expert and professor of international law at Wake Forest University, comes amid a biodiversity crisis that many scientists have pegged as the beginning of Earth's sixth mass extinction event.

PRI.ORG

[Drought doesn't cause famine. People do](#)

The United Nations announced this month that more than 20 million people in four countries are teetering on the edge of famine, calling the situation "the worst humanitarian crisis" since the end of World War II. The current situations in Somalia, Yemen, Nigeria and South Sudan are undeniably harsh. The key for avoiding the worst outcomes? Political will, experts say.

WASHINGTONPOST.COM

[Keep watch for these three new labels on packaged foods](#)

Food shopping can be a daunting experience. With roughly 20,000 new products introduced each year, decoding the nutrition facts and label claims on even a small fraction of them could keep you in the grocery aisle all day. That's where front-of-the-package emblems come in - nongovernment, third-party-authorized stamps that tell us at a glance that a product meets a specific set of standards.

THEGUARDIAN.COM

[World Water Day: one in four children will live with water scarcity by 2040](#)

One in four of the world's children will be living in areas with extremely limited water resources by 2040 as a result of climate change, the UN has warned. Within two decades, 600 million children will be in regions enduring extreme water stress, with a great deal of competition for the available supply. The poorest and most disadvantaged will suffer most, according to research published by Unicef to mark World Water Day on Wednesday.

CNN.COM

[**Soda wars. The UK's tax on sugary drinks is working**](#)

Britain's new tax on sugary drinks won't come into effect for more than a year, but it's already working. The government announced the new tax in 2016 as part of an effort to reduce childhood obesity, projecting that it would raise £520 million (\$632 million) in additional revenue.

USATODAY.COM

[**EU wastes 88 million tons of food a year**](#)

The sheer waste of food had been bothering teacher Marijke De Jongh for so long that two years ago she set up a pop-up restaurant to serve perfectly good groceries and meat that were approaching their expiry date. With her Rekub team, she followed it up with an app that brings thousands of consumers to retail shops where they can buy food closing in on its sell-by date.

NYTIMES.COM

[**Malnutrition wiping out children in Northern Nigeria, aid workers say**](#)

Starvation in northern Nigeria's Borno State is so bad that a whole slice of the population - children under 5 - appears to have died, aid agencies say. As the Nigerian army has driven the terrorist group Boko Haram out of the area, about two million people have been displaced. Many are living in more than 100 refugee camps.

INDIATODAY.IN

[**Water scarcity could result in some regions losing 6% of their GDP: World Bank report**](#)

Water security is one of the most difficult of the United Nations (UN) sustainable development goals to achieve. Without managing water resources other development goals like food and energy security and better quality of life will remain elusive. A 2016 World Bank report finds that water scarcity, triggered by climate change can result in some regions losing 6 per cent of their GDP. It will also trigger forced migration and conflict.

LEGISLATION

USDA.GOV

[**Climate Hubs and 4-H: partnering with tomorrow's leaders to sustain agriculture today**](#)

U.S. Congress recognized the benefit of this approach with the passing of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914 that created Cooperative Extension and nationalized 4-H clubs. Today, 4-H remains an important conduit for educating the agricultural leaders of tomorrow while imparting best practices to the producers of today.

GOV.UK

[**Agenda 2030: delivering the Global Goals**](#)

The 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development (the Goals) will shape the world's approach to growth and sustainable development until 2030. This ambitious agenda sets out the framework through which the world will work together to combat the most pressing challenges of our time, including eradicating extreme poverty, ending hunger, protecting our environment and breaking down gender barriers. This document provides an overview and examples of how the UK Government is contributing to the delivery of each of the Goals.

EUROPARL.EUROPA.EU/THINKTANK

[**Circular economy package. Four legislative proposals on waste**](#)

As part of a shift towards a circular economy, the European Commission made four legislative proposals introducing new waste-management targets regarding reuse, recycling and landfilling, strengthening provisions on waste prevention and extended producer responsibility, and streamlining definitions, reporting obligations and calculation methods for targets.

EC.EUROPA.EU

[**New European 'Big Data' e-infrastructure to support biodiversity research**](#)

The European Commission today granted the legal status of European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) to the e-Science and Technology European Infrastructure for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Research (LifeWatch). With this measure, the EU provides the facility with many administrative advantages enjoyed by international organisations and therefore helps to successfully implement the infrastructure project.

EUROPARL.EUROPA.EU

[**From farm to fork: strengthening food checks in Europe**](#)

Consumers are entitled to know that the food they buy and eat is safe, however food fraud cases such as the 2013 horsemeat scandal show that is not always the case. On Wednesday 15 March MEPs vote on new rules to tighten up official inspections throughout the food chain. We talked to Austrian S&D member Karin Kadenbach, the MEP responsible for steering the proposal through Parliament, about the benefits of the new legislation.

NIFA.USDA.GOV

[**USDA announces \\$12.1 million to support crop protection and pest management**](#)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) announced \$12.1 in available funding through the Crop Protection and Pest Management (CPPM) Competitive Grants Program. "Pests, including insects and other arthropods, microbial pathogens, weeds, and vertebrates pose threats to U.S. food security," said NIFA Director Sonny Ramaswamy.

MIDLOTHIAN.GOV.UK

[**Green energy boost as Millerhill food waste recycling plant officially opens**](#)

Councillors from Midlothian and The City of Edinburgh Councils paid a visit to the Zero Waste Parc in Millerhill to see for themselves how a new state of the art facility will turn the region's food waste into renewable energy. This facility is capable of recycling all of the discarded food that is collected by the two councils, plus some additional waste from local businesses and industries.

EC.EUROPA.EU

[**#Whatfoodmeans in Ethiopia**](#)

In 2015, Ethiopia endured its worst dry spell in half a century. Almost 18 million people suffered food shortages, more than double the number in any previous year, and 10 million people needed emergency food aid. The European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Operations and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) have teamed up to support the most vulnerable people in Ethiopia.

INSPECTION.GC.CA

[**Government of Canada proposes new rules to strengthen food safety**](#)

The proposed Safe Food for Canadians Regulations would better protect Canadian families by putting a greater emphasis on preventing food safety risks for all foods imported into Canada or sold across provinces. The regulations would also apply to foods prepared for export. Food businesses would be required to have preventive controls in place to identify and manage food safety risks before products are sold to consumers.

THELOCAL.FR

[**France bans unlimited refills of soda drinks to battle bulging obesity levels**](#)

[**The new law was published in the government's Journal Officiel**](#) website on Thursday. It specifically states that it's illegal to sell soft drinks at a fixed price for an unlimited amount of drink, and illegal to offer unlimited amounts for free. The ban applies to all soft drinks or soda "fountains" in places open to the public, including fast food-chains and restaurants. The law is another step to fight the problem of obesity.

INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES & NGOs

UNICEF.ORG

[**27 million people lack safe water in countries facing or at risk of famine**](#)

Water shortages, inadequate sanitation, poor hygiene practices and disease outbreaks are posing an additional threat to severely malnourished children in northeast Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen. "The combination of malnutrition, dirty water and poor sanitation sets off a vicious cycle from which many children never recover," said Manuel Fontaine, UNICEF Director of Emergency Programmes.

IISD.ORG

[**Fifth Mediterranean Forest Week**](#)

The Fifth Mediterranean Forest Week aims to strengthen exchanges and synergies between global stakeholders in the restoration of Mediterranean forests and landscapes, to help achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 15 (Life on Land) and other globally agreed targets related to forest restoration, and facilitate the adaptation of Mediterranean forest landscapes to climate change.

WORLDBANK.ORG

[**Sovereign wealth funds: the catalyst for climate finance?**](#)

Following the Paris deal on international climate change, governments are beginning to explore new financing mechanisms for investing in the growing low carbon economy. Over the next decade sovereign wealth funds (SWFs) could become an important game changer in green investing.

WHO.INT

[**WHO support saves lives of malnourished children in Syria**](#)

Six years into the Syria crisis, malnutrition rates have increased, especially among children under 5 years of age. Almost 4.3 million boys and girls under the age of 5 are in need of nutrition services. WHO is working to ensure that children suffering from malnutrition are diagnosed and treated before their condition leads to serious and long-term medical complications.

UN.ORG

['Turn the tide on plastic' urges UN, as microplastics in the seas now outnumber stars in our galaxy](#)

Launching an unprecedented global campaign, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is urging everyone to eliminate the use of microplastics and stop the excessive, wasteful use of single-use plastic, to save the world's seas and oceans from irreversible damage before it's too late.

WORLDBANK.ORG

[Involving communities to achieve sustainable development](#)

The Government of India's ambitious \$22 billion program - the Swachh Bharat Mission - aims to achieve universal access to sanitation and rid the country of open defecation by 2019. The World Bank is supporting it with a \$1.5 billion loan and technical assistance.

IFAD.ORG

[Billions needed to eradicate poverty and hunger - IFAD conference looks for new ways of financing](#)

The world needs to take urgent action to mobilise the estimated US\$265 billion a year needed to achieve the first two Sustainable Development Goals to end poverty and hunger by 2030, said Kanayo F. Nwanze, President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) at last night's opening of a conference focused on finding innovative ways to finance rural development.

FAO.ORG

[Overweight affects almost half the population of all countries in Latin America and the Caribbean except for Haiti](#)

Obesity and overweight are on the rise throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, and are particularly prevalent among women and children, according to a new report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO).

WEFORUM.ORG

[Women's economic empowerment is the smart thing to do. What's stopping us?](#)

Inclusive and sustainable development around the world - leaving no one behind - is the overarching vision of the UN's 2030 Agenda. Gender equality and women's economic empowerment are central to the realization of this vision, yet gender gaps around the world remain large, pervasive and persistent.

WEFORUM.ORG

[We can eradicate hunger by 2030. Here's how](#)

Every day too many men and women in countries across the globe struggle to feed their children a simple, nutritious meal. When we talk about achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we're talking about transforming the lives of these families at the bottom of the economic pyramid. The SDGs offer us a results-driven blueprint for achieving worldwide peace and prosperity.

RESEARCH

IFPRI.ORG

[**Nutrition and economic development. Exploring Egypt's exceptionalism and the role of food subsidies**](#)

Egypt faces two nutritional challenges. The first is the "growth-nutrition disconnect." High economic growth has not been accompanied by reduction in chronic child malnutrition, at least throughout the 2000s. The second challenge is the simultaneous presence of chronic undernutrition and overnutrition (due to excess consumption of calories).

ONLINELIBRARY.WILEY.COM

[**Mediterranean diet may reduce risk of form of breast cancer**](#)

Following a Mediterranean diet could help reduce the risk of contracting one of the worst types of breast cancer by 40%, according to a large study for the *W*published in the *International Journal of Cancer* on Mondayworld Cancer Research Fund. The Mediterranean diet, which is rich in olive oil, fish, fruit, nuts, vegetables and wholegrains, has well-publicised benefits, including reducing the risk of stroke and heart disease.

THECHICAGOCOUNCIL.ORG

[**Five data-driven insights for greater food security in 2017**](#)

Each year the Global Hunger Index (GHI) is calculated to track country-by-country progress toward the global goal of zero hunger. This year's report contains some great news - the country Myanmar, for example, has made huge strides in addressing malnutrition - but also many sobering stats. Here are five must-know insights from the GHI released this past fall.

NEWSSCIENTIST.COM

[**Junk food tax and veg subsidies could add 500,000 years of life**](#)

Taxing junk food and subsidising healthier options could save Australia billions of dollars by preventing people from getting sick. A study that looked at consumer habits finds that the two-pronged approach should be more effective than one based on taxes alone. But the Australian government has no plans to either tax unhealthy food or subsidise fruit and vegetables.

EUIPO.EUROPA.ORG

[**The economic cost of ipr infringement in the pesticides sector**](#)

In a study carried out in collaboration with the European Patent Office¹, the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO)², acting through the Observatory, has estimated that approximately 42% of total economic activity and 28% of all employment in the EU is directly generated by IPR-intensive industries, with a further 10% of jobs in the EU arising from purchases of goods and services from other industries by IPR-intensive industries.

EUREKALERT.COM

[**New research concludes that pasta eaters have better diet quality**](#)

New research analyzing the diets of people who eat pasta has revealed more good news about one of America's favorite foods. The research on pasta, presented at The Obesity Society's annual meeting in New Orleans this past November, concluded that pasta consumption in adults is associated with overall better diet quality when compared to adults who don't eat pasta.

THE-AMERICAN-INTEREST.COM

[UK can farm smarter, greener](#)

A new report from researchers at the University of Sheffield has found that a simple adjustment in farming practices could increase crop yields in the UK's peatlands while simultaneously increasing that soil's ability to store the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide.

BIOMEDCENTRAL.COM

[A randomised controlled trial of dietary improvement for adults with major depression \(the 'SMILES' trial\)](#)

The possible therapeutic impact of dietary changes on existing mental illness is largely unknown. The results of this randomized controlled trial indicate that dietary improvement may provide an efficacious and accessible treatment strategy for the management of this highly prevalent mental disorder.

AAP.ORG

[The Mediterranean diet and ADHD in children and adolescents](#)

We found a positive relationship between a lower adherence to the Mediterranean diet and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) diagnoses. The current findings suggest that certain dietary habits may play a role in ADHD development.

ACADEMIC.OUP.COM

[Grilled, barbecued meats may raise death risk for breast cancer survivors](#)

Grilled, barbecued, and smoked meat intake, a prevalent dietary source of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) carcinogens, may increase the risk of incident breast cancer. A new study published on the Journal of the National Cancer Institute shows that high intake of grilled/ barbecued and smoked meat may increase mortality after breast cancer.



FOCUS ON

FAMINE IN YEMEN, SOUTH SUDAN, SOMALIA AND NIGERIA THE WORST HUMANITARIAN CRISIS SINCE WWII.

On March 10, 2017 Stephen O'Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator at the United Nations, reported on his trip to Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia and Nigeria and talked about the [risk of 20 million people dying of hunger](#) in the worst humanitarian crisis since the UN was founded in 1945. We have therefore decided to analyse the word "famine" among our selection of online resources...