

Obesity, undernutrition, and climate change: how can human rights help?

WHAT'S NEW?

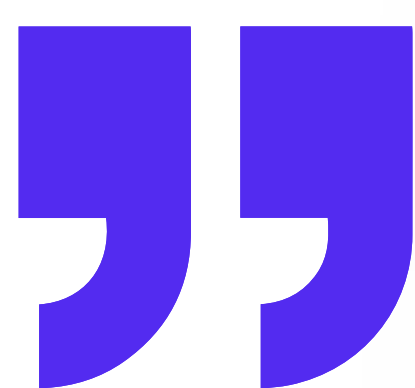


Human rights law has not been sufficiently exploited in the context of diets and climate change.



The modern, global food system is unsustainable for human and planetary health

The widespread consumption of highly processed foods and the resulting malnutrition have led to a dramatic rise in **non-communicable diseases** (NCDs) globally, including diabetes, cardiovascular disorders, some cancers and respiratory diseases. In parallel, global food production is responsible for around 30% of greenhouse gas emissions. Due to their common underlying drivers, the Lancet has dubbed these coexisting epidemics of obesity, undernutrition and climate change the 'Global Syndemic'. We urgently need a comprehensive reform of global food systems and diets, but the influence of **food industry actors** in health negotiations is diluting health policies at domestic and international levels.



The tobacco example can pave the way for reforming diets and food systems.

A human rights-based, regime interaction approach to climate change and malnutrition: reforming food systems for human and planetary health

Rosalind Turkie



Lessons from tobacco control

- 1 Recognizing the **obesogenic** nature of certain food environments and products will legitimize a stricter regulation of food industry actors
- 2 Excluding industry actors from health negotiations will allow regulators to push for stricter policies.
- 3 Human rights are key to reforming food systems in an effective and **egalitarian** way.



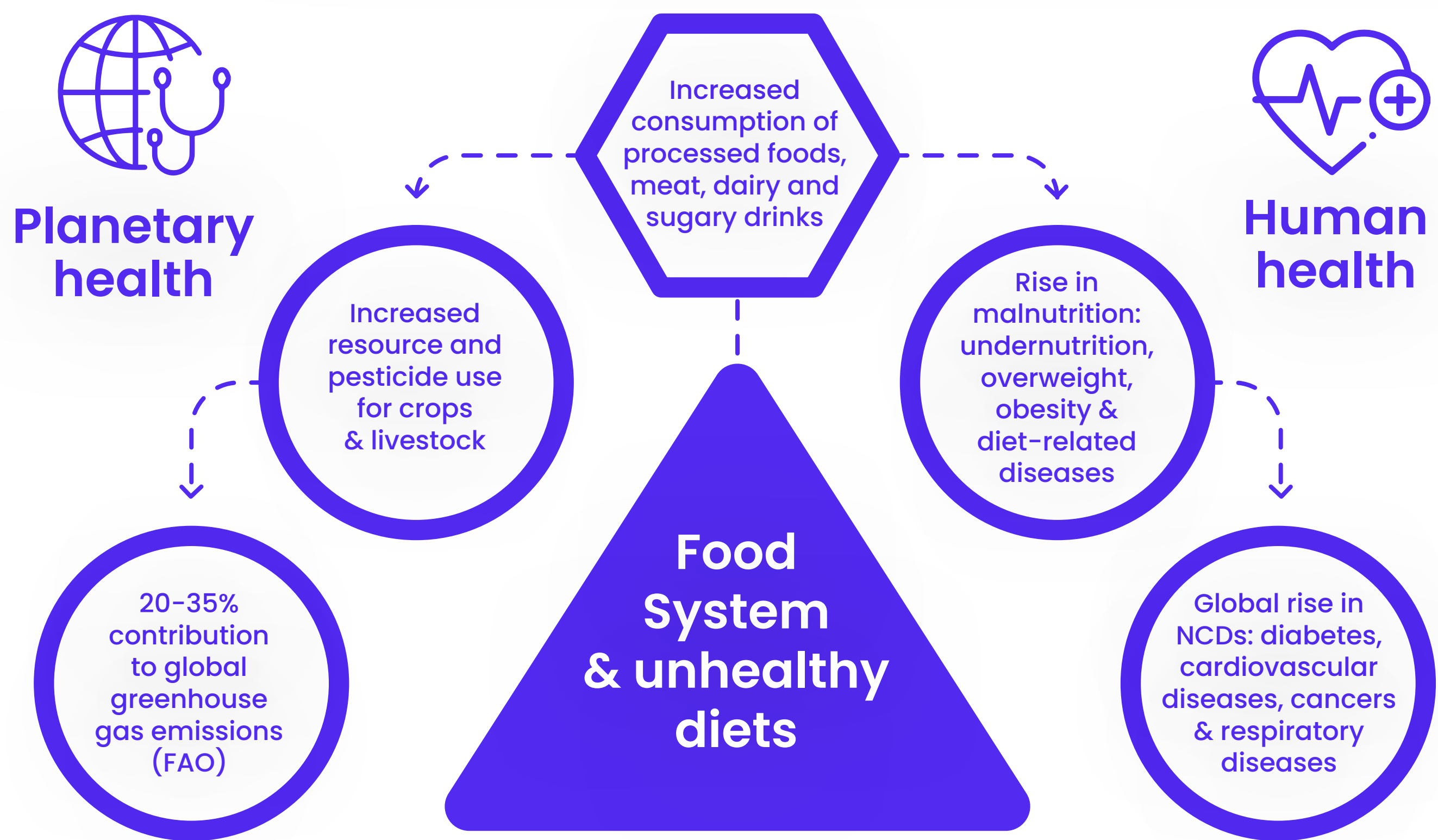
Overcoming conflicts between trade, health and human rights

International human rights law can provide the normative framework for reforming global food systems, but this framework needs strengthening by interacting with other international legal regimes. This is because of the strong influence of industry actors in health negotiations, which frequently results in **diluted health policies** at both national and international levels.



'Trade-restrictive' health policies must withstand legal challenges from industry

The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control has led to States adopting legal measures to control tobacco consumption. These have been subject to various legal challenges by the tobacco industry under trade arguments. However, most tobacco control measures have been able to withstand such challenges from industry. International trade & investment tribunals have accepted that public health protection is a **legitimate objective for restricting trade**. This approach could and should be applied to diets.



**THE HEALTH RISKS CAUSED
BY OUR FOOD SYSTEM AND DIETS**

GET IN TOUCH!

Are you also working on NCDs? Connect with me on **LinkedIn** and I will send you a PDF of my paper!



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