



Via email: [michael.lyon@byron.nsw.gov.au](mailto:michael.lyon@byron.nsw.gov.au)

21 April 2022

Dear Mayor Lyon:

I hope this message finds you well. I'm writing from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). We know how devastating the recent floods were for Byron Bay and its residents. This disaster, fuelled by the climate catastrophe, is not the first of its kind, and unless we make radical changes in an effort to prevent further destruction, it won't be the last.

**Happily, there is a powerful change that you can personally make today to protect the planet: go vegan.**

The latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change offered a grim warning that Earth is heading towards catastrophic heating of over 2 degrees, and it's been predicted that, if all countries were to mimic Australia's response, we would careen towards a rise in excess of 3 degrees – far beyond what we could adapt to. But it's not just our energy and transport sectors that need an overhaul. Our food system does, too.

Raising and killing animals for food contributes heavily to the many serious environmental problems our planet is facing. University of Tasmania Professor of Environmental Sustainability Barry Brook estimates that raising animals for human consumption is responsible for half of Australia's short-term greenhouse gas emissions – that's *more* than the coal industry.

Choosing vegan food is the simplest, most effective thing that each of us can do in our daily lives to help mitigate the effects of the climate catastrophe. In fact, by switching to vegan meals, you can reduce your food-related carbon emissions by up to 73%, as they have the *smallest carbon footprint* of all food.

As well as switching to eco-friendly vegan eating yourself, we ask that you commit to serving only plant-based meals at Byron Shire Council events. Given animal agriculture's devastating contribution to the climate disaster, anything less would be a slap in the face to residents and ratepayers who've already lost so much in this year's floods. Our leaders must take decisive and meaningful action now to help protect Australians from future flooding and other natural disasters caused by the climate crisis.

Of course, it's not just the planet that will benefit. Each vegan saves the lives of nearly 200 animals a year. Given that, like us, all animals are individuals who feel pain and fear, and that they're brutally slaughtered at just a fraction of their natural lives in the food system, this is huge.

We sincerely hope you will commit to upgrading your own lifestyle and the catering practices of Byron Shire Council. With the plethora of vegan alternatives now available, it's certainly no challenge – but the impact on the future of the planet could be immense.

Yours faithfully,

Emily Rice  
PETA

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