

PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

Tanya Plibersek
Minister for the Environment and Water

Dear Ms Plibersek:

I am writing from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) regarding a very serious issue: the future of our planet. As you know, 22 April is Earth Day, a day when we reflect on our personal actions and how they impact the environment. Australia is already experiencing the impacts of climate change, with rising sea levels and weather extremes. Now, one study predicts that Australia could experience “megadroughts” lasting for more than 20 years.

Given that raising animals for their flesh, eggs, and milk is a major driver of the climate change that will further exacerbate droughts, we ask you to mark Earth Day by taking the lead on this issue **and either not showering for six months or going vegan for six months**. For context, a single day of eating vegan saves 4,160 litres of water – the equivalent of four months’ worth of showers.

The megadrought predictions arise from research by the Australian National University and the Australian Research Council’s Centre of Excellence for Climate Extremes and are made *before* factoring in the post-Industrial Revolution human impact on the climate. “The only thing we can do to lessen the potential severity and length of future droughts is to rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions,” notes one of the study’s coauthors.

Much emphasis is placed on energy and transport sector emissions, but the third-largest source of greenhouse gas is animal agriculture. Methane from animals on farms accounts for most of Australia’s agricultural emissions and has more than 80 times the warming power of carbon dioxide over its first 20 years in the atmosphere. Additionally, animal agriculture produces 65% of the world’s nitrous oxide emissions – this gas has a global warming impact 296 times greater than carbon dioxide.

Of course, farming animals is also remarkably water intensive. Each Australian cow raised for beef drinks up to 112 litres every day – and there are almost 27 *million* of them! Add to this the water requirements of our 70 million sheep and 1.4 million cows used for dairy – as well as the water needed to clean filthy farms and blood-soaked abattoirs – and it’s clear: **we simply don’t have the resources to sustain animal agriculture.**

We’re sure that the idea of going six months without washing feels uncomfortable, perhaps even unimaginable. Happily, going vegan is as enjoyable as it is ethical. From whole foods to plant-based meat and cheese, vegan food is abundant and delicious. Opting to forgo animal-derived products will make a *far greater* positive impact than not having

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showers will – not only for the planet but also for animals who are sentient individuals just like Frankie and Robbie.

Severe, prolonged droughts would break Australia, but as the environment and water minister, you're in a unique and powerful position to do the right thing and set a good example, and what better time to begin than Earth Day?

Choose to go vegan and we'll send you a delicious hamper to get you started. Opt not to shower and we'll send you some cruelty-free deodorant and pegs for your cabinet colleagues to wear on their noses.

Please let us know which you decide. We're looking forward to hearing from you!

Yours faithfully,

Mimi Bekhechi
Campaigns Advisor
PETA

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