

# CONCERN DEBATES

League  
Phase Motions  
2022-23

On September 25th 2015, 193 countries adopted a set of goals to end poverty and hunger, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all, as part of a new sustainable development agenda. Each goal has specific targets to be achieved by the year 2030.

When launching the 17 Goals the then UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon stated that “...this can be the first generation to witness a world without extreme poverty, where all people – not only the powerful and the privileged – can participate and contribute equally, free of discrimination and want.”

For the goals to be reached, everyone needs to do their part: governments, the private sector, civil society and ‘ordinary’ people.

This year, once again our Concern Debate motions highlight some of the individual goals and the challenges that we must face (and the debates we must have) if the goals are to be achieved.

## THE GLOBAL GOALS

For Sustainable Development



# Concern Debates

## LEAGUE PHASE MOTIONS 2022-23

**Context:** After decades of progress on reducing world hunger, trends in recent years indicate that it is on the rise again. Are GMOs a possible solution to ending world hunger?

2 ZERO HUNGER



GMOs are plants or animals that have been genetically engineered with DNA from bacteria, viruses or other plants and animals. These experimental combinations of genes from different species do not occur in nature or in traditional crossbreeding. The first genetically engineered plants to be produced for human consumption were introduced in the mid-1990s.

Despite producing enough food to feed 10 billion people (or 1.5 planet earths'), hunger still persists. In a profound example of how unequal our world is, there are 690 million people who go to bed hungry each night while 650 million people are obese. (World Health Organisation, 2020) We are also told that edible food waste amounts to 1.3 billion tonnes globally each year, more than enough to feed the world's hungry.

A combination of conflict, the climate crisis, increasing cost of living and the ripple effects of COVID-19 have caused the world to lose progress in the fight for Zero Hunger. While there is no single solution to ending world hunger, there are people who will argue that GMOs have an important part to play. In the Central African Republic (CAR), 80% of the population relies on subsistence agriculture and livestock for their livelihoods. This is a devastating number when you consider that the country is more than a decade into a civil war with no sign of peace.

*Would a heavier reliance on GMOs in the CAR benefit the people living there?*

The recent conflict in Ukraine has brought to light the impact conflict has on food prices with massive increases in richer countries, Lebanon being the worst hit with a 332% increase in the price of food. Utilizing GMO crops can reduce this burden of cost. GMOs crops can be made to grow quicker, with increased protein and vitamin levels, or with less fat. GM drought-resistant crops can help to alleviate famine where low rainfall often leads to food shortages. GMO supporters believe that in coming decades the world will grow warmer and more crowded and as a result GMOs will be needed to feed its swelling population.

Those who argue against GMOs as a solution to world hunger worry about the long-term effects of GMO foods on human health. They believe that not enough testing has been done to evaluate the potential harm to humans or the environment, and that if problems arise, there is no way to contain genetically engineered crops, as wind carries seeds from one farm to another, cross contaminating non-GMO species. They argue that we already grow enough food to feed the world and don't need to modify foods in order to increase yields.

SO...are GMOs necessary in the fight to end world hunger? **Debate it!**

## ROUND 1 "GMOs are necessary in the fight to end world hunger"



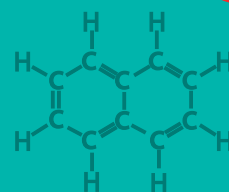
### Research links:

<https://trello.com/b/R0OVemw4/concern-debates>



### Watch out for:

To sign up for a Concern World Food Day talk email [schools@concern.net](mailto:schools@concern.net) or complete this sign up form: <https://www.concern.net/schools-and-youth/arrange-a-talk> COP27 to be held from 6 to 18 November 2022 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, <https://www.cop27.eg/>



# Concern Debates

## LEAGUE PHASE MOTIONS 2022-23

13 CLIMATE ACTION



**Context:** *Is giving up meat the best chance we have to save the planet?  
Can you truly call yourself a Climate Activist if you're not a vegetarian?*

Climate activists are drivers of projects aimed at protecting the Earth and its plants and animals. The first climate activists can be dated back to India in the 1720s. Much has changed since then. The term climate activist is always changing and adapting to meet the challenges of today. There are many different types of activists and many forms of activism.

Many Climate Activists will argue that giving up meat is a must. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, Green House Gass (GHG) emissions from livestock and its supply chain equate to 14.5% of total human GHG emissions. This exceeds all emissions from all forms of transport. A vegan or vegetarian diet could cut those emissions by up to 70%.

Studies supporting vegetarian diets as a response to the Climate Crises state that changing dietary patterns could save \$1 trillion annually by preventing health care costs and lost productivity. That figure balloons to as much as \$30 trillion annually when also considering the economic value of lost life. And that doesn't even include the economic benefits of avoiding devastating extreme weather events that could result from climate change.

However, eating less meat will help reduce your carbon footprint but is it an integral part of being a climate activist?

In 2017, 100 of the largest corporations were responsible for over 71% of global emissions. Individuals eating less meat is just a drop in the ever-depleting ocean when it comes to tackling climate change. While local climate activists do all they can to fight climate change, many large corporations are doing all they can to fight taxes and carry on with 'business as usual'.

The scale of the global climate crisis has instilled the need to speak out and to take action. Will going vegetarian make a real difference, should the onus not be put on governments and corporations, the ones doing the most damage rather than on individuals? Poor public transport and lack of affordable ethical food will of course drive people to use private vehicles and purchase cheap fast food. Governments and Corporations are simply not doing enough to tackle climate change. They are the ones who have the power to change the world the issue and leave climate activists be what they are, individuals helping the planet in ways they see fit, free from climate guilt and enjoying the lifestyle choices they choose.

SO... should true climate activists give up eating meat? **Debate it!**



## ROUND 2 “Climate activists must give up eating meat”



### Research links:

<https://trello.com/b/R0OVemw4/concern-debates>



### Watch out for:

COP ON festival 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of October <https://copon.ie/>  
email [Laurakate.howells@concern.net](mailto:Laurakate.howells@concern.net) to sign up



### Visit:

1Planet4All | Concern Worldwide

International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste 29th September  
<https://www.fao.org/international-day-awareness-food-loss-waste/en/>

# Concern Debates

## LEAGUE PHASE MOTIONS 2022-23

**Context:** 38.4 million people globally were living with HIV in 2021. That's over seven times the population of Ireland and yet HIV/AIDS rarely makes the headlines.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



HIV stands for: Human Immunodeficiency Virus. AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is the name used to describe a number of potentially life-threatening infections and illnesses that happen when your immune system has been severely damaged by the HIV virus. 40.1 million people have died from AIDS-related illnesses since the start of the pandemic in the mid 1980s.

If you hear the word pandemic now you jump right to 'Covid -19' and not HIV/AIDS. Early testing, diagnosis, treatment compliance and a healthy lifestyle means that people living with HIV can now live as long as anyone else. HIV is technically 100% preventable. So is it now the forgotten pandemic?

Sub-Saharan Africa, home to two-thirds of all people living with HIV globally, is the hardest hit region in the world. New data from UNAIDS on the global HIV response (July 2022) reveals that during the last two years of COVID-19 and other global crises, progress against the HIV pandemic has faltered, resources have shrunk, and millions of lives are at risk as a result.

Many will argue HIV/AIDS is not the forgotten pandemic due to the new global alliance launched to end AIDS in children by 2030, the HIV Prevention 2025 Road Map — Getting on track to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030 and the SDG 3.3 Target: By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases.

Those believing it is the forgotten pandemic will argue that because it has been around since the mid 1980s many decision makers, politicians and funders no-longer fear or sense an urgency about defeating HIV and AIDS but have now adopted an attitude of tolerance and complacency.

*SO...is HIV/AIDS in the Global South the forgotten pandemic? **Debate it!***

### ROUND 3

## “HIV/AIDS in the Global South is the forgotten pandemic”



#### Research Links:

<https://trello.com/b/R0OVemw4/concern-debates>



#### Watch out for:

World Aids day December 1<sup>st</sup> <https://www.hivireland.ie/>

<https://www.concern.net/knowledge-hub/knowledge-matters-hiv-and-aids>