

PRESS RELEASE

The Italian livestock system is sustainable

New studies revise emission calculations and significantly reduce the environmental impacts of Italian livestock

Rome, February 20th - The Italian livestock sector contributes to **combating global warming and mitigating climate change**. This, in synthesis, is the result of a team of Italian researchers who have **recalculated the emissions of Italy's livestock sector** using a **new metric** proposed by a group of **atmospheric physicists from Oxford** and published in [Nature](#).

*"The introduction of these new metrics owed to the work of a pool of British physicists is destined to change the frame of the debate on the livestock system's sustainability", commented **Giuseppe Pulina**, President of Carni Sostenibili, a non-profit organisation promoting conscious consumption and the sustainable production of meats and cured meats. The study by Oxford researchers has considered, in fact, for **the first time the difference** in action on global warming between **short-lived climate pollutants**, such as methane, and **long-lived climate pollutants**, such as carbon dioxide.*

These new metrics take into account the permanence of gases in the atmosphere

Indeed, the researchers observed that if a greenhouse gas remains in the atmosphere for a short time, its effect on global warming is of zero value if emissions remain constant every year and negative (i.e., the atmosphere cools down) if emissions decrease. This is because by reducing its concentration, its contribution to the greenhouse effect is also reduced, but it becomes strongly warming if emissions increase, as this type of gas has a much higher greenhouse power than CO₂. The new metrics, therefore, consider this difference and, in particular, **how long a gas remains in the atmosphere**, a substantial difference if we consider that **methane practically disappears after 50 years**, while **carbon dioxide** remains in the atmosphere for over a **thousand years**.

Italian livestock: emissions reduced to -49 million tons of CO₂ equivalent in 10 years

The team of Italian researchers, based on the official data published by the Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA) from 1990 to 2020, **applied these new metrics to methane emissions from all Italian livestock supply chains** and subsequently compared the results with those obtained using the old metrics. [What emerges](#) is a significant reduction in emissions and **a negative impact on the environmental footprint**. If we look at the total cumulative contribution of Italian animal production to global warming in the last ten years - methane and nitrous oxide emissions - with the application of the new metrics, this decreases until it becomes negative: from **+206 million tons of CO₂ equivalent calculated with the old method (GWP) to - 49 million tons estimated with the new metrics (GWP*)**.

Carni Sostenibili (<https://www.carnisostenibili.it/en/>) is an Italian non-profit association representing all the meat processing and transformation chains (beef, pork and poultry) to promote sustainable production and conscious consumption of meats and cured meats. Founded in 2012, the Association has created a digital communication platform, supported by the publication of studies and research, to promote correct scientific information and its dissemination regarding the entire meat supply chain's environmental, economic and social sustainability.

