



HOW MANY LIVES FOR OUR MEAL? EXPLORING DYNAMICS OF ANIMAL SLAUGHTERING FOR FOOD

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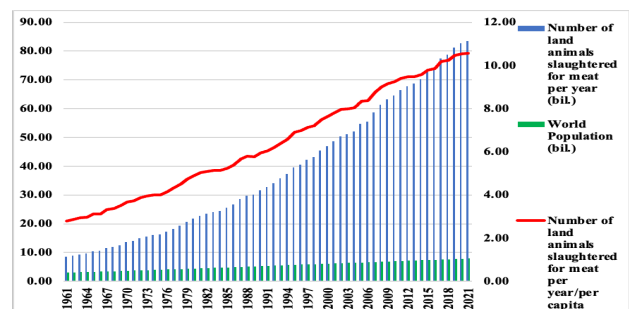
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Abstract: Global meat consumption is staggering, with 360 million tons produced annually. Daily, 900,000 cows and 202 million chickens are slaughtered, alongside hundreds of millions of fish. This immense scale highlights significant ethical and moral considerations.

- **Introduction** The global demand for meat, driven by population growth and economic prosperity, leads to over 75 billion land animals slaughtered annually and even more aquatic animals. This industry causes habitat degradation, biodiversity loss, and significant greenhouse gas emissions. Intensive farming practices also raise severe ethical and sustainability issues.
- **Material and method** We conducted a comprehensive study by collecting and analyzing data from sources like Our World in Data, FAO, and WHO. Using scientific databases (Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed), we examined animal slaughter volumes, methods, and impacts on welfare and sustainability.

• Results and discussions

Understanding the relationship between population growth and meat consumption is crucial for sustainable food practices. Over six decades, from 1961 to 2021, the number of animals slaughtered annually increased from under 10 billion to 83 billion, paralleling a rise in global population from 3 billion to almost 8 billion.



This surge reflects the intensification of industrial meat production and increased per capita meat consumption, from 2.81 animals per person per year in 1961 to over 10.5 in 2021. These trends underscore the pressure on natural resources and highlight the need for sustainable food policies.

• **Conclusions** Analyzing animal slaughter data reveals significant ecological, food security, and public health impacts. The exponential rise in meat consumption drives deforestation, biodiversity loss, and greenhouse gas emissions, while depleting water and soil resources. Addressing these issues requires sustainable practices, equitable food distribution, and promoting plant-based diets to improve health and ensure environmental sustainability.