



**FEED
BACK**



LGPS INDUSTRIAL LIVESTOCK DIVESTMENT BRIEFING FOR COUNCILLORS

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About Feedback: Feedback is an environmental campaigning charity working for food that is good for the planet and its people. To do so, we challenge power, catalyse action, and empower people to achieve positive change. Our campaigns include a founding campaign for divestment from the industry meat and dairy sector – Big Livestock vs The Planet – as well as campaigns to bring about more sustainable diets, address food waste and create community-led solutions to food system problems. Charity registration number 1155064.

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LGPS Industrial Livestock Divestment Briefing for Councillors

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Cover image: Grass fire at night in Pantanal, Brazil. Image license expires on 8th Sept 2022. **Credit:** Bence Mate / naturepl.com



Photo: Steel cages (farrowing crates), restrict the movement of mother pigs (sows), and means she can see but not reach her piglets to care for them properly. They create severe stress, discomfort and suffering for mother pigs but are still used in many parts of the world. (These photos are from an undisclosed location in the EU). **Credit:** World Animal Protection

INTRODUCTION

In total, UK councils invest over £238 million in Industrial livestock companies and £54 million in industrial soya companies through Local Government Pension Funds (LGPS)¹, on behalf of nearly seven million pension-holders.

Investments in industrial livestock and soya companies fuel our food system's biggest drivers of emissions, deforestation, human rights violations, pollution, pandemic risks and industrial-scale animal cruelty. These companies are also a long-term bad investment because when an incumbents' core business model is under threat they lose investors money.

Divestment is the process of selling off investments - often to end financial support for companies on ethical grounds. The industrial livestock divestment movement is asking local authority pension funds to stop future investments in industrial livestock companies,

and to sell off its current investments in industrial livestock over a reasonable period of up to 5 years.

This briefing explains what industrial livestock divestment means in practice, and why it is so important to protect people and planet. It explores the growing trend towards fossil fuel divestment by UK councils, and why industrial livestock companies are the new frontier in divestment from businesses put in terminal decline by the need to avert climate change.

Councils can send a clear message on the need for climate action when it comes to industrial livestock with no impact on performance and increase sustainable investment in the local area: we lay out the case for how industrial livestock divestment can help councils achieve this.

WHAT ARE “INDUSTRIAL LIVESTOCK” COMPANIES?

The types of livestock company listed on international financial markets, which are invested in by local authorities and other investors, are never small-scale more sustainable meat producers. They are large-scale “industrial” livestock corporations. What does this mean?

“Livestock” here refers to beef, pork, chicken, farmed fish, dairy and egg production.

Generally, “industrial” livestock has the following characteristics:

- Mass-production of low-cost meat or dairy
- Large embedded land use for growing feed, often overseas – in other words, it relies on a lot of ‘extra’ land for feed production, which can contribute to deforestation and other forms of nature loss
- High productivity often achieved through “intensive” farming systems which associated with low animal welfare
- Innovation is solely profit-driven at the expense of animal welfare, environmental and social sustainability (i.e. driven by a need for higher shareholder returns and growth)
- Productivity and efficiency are understood as the financial value generated



In contrast, in a ‘non-industrial’ approach to livestock rearing, you see the following characteristics:

- Less embedded land use linked to imported feed (even if the local land footprint may be larger due to less intensive practices);
- High levels of nutrient recycling, with soils replenished and enriched (e.g. through careful manure management);
- A high ratio of nutritional value to external resource input (i.e. few inputs, such as fertilisers or energy, are required to generate nutritional value);
- Diverse outputs (i.e. farmed produce, such as fruit and vegetables, in addition to meat or dairy);
- Productivity understood as seeking maximum nutritional value for minimal environmental damage, or maximum environmental enhancement.
- Farm animals are in high welfare systems where their physical, environmental and behavioural needs are met. Systems prioritise the Five Domains of Animal Welfare with positive nutrition, environment, health, and behavioural interactions leading to positive mental states.
- At its least industrial, livestock rearing is sometimes described as ‘agro-ecological’ or ‘regenerative’.

Photo: Mother pigs (sows) at this farm are either kept in group housing or cages as the farm is transitioning to have higher welfare conditions. The location is undisclosed to protect our relationship with the farmer. **Credit:** World Animal Protection

DIVESTMENT IN PRACTICE – A GROWING MOMENTUM

Fossil fuel divestment has gained considerable momentum. Six UK local authority pension funds have already committed to full divestment from fossil fuels, and twenty-four have passed individual fossil fuel divestment motions, as of February 2021², showing divestment is possible and gaining traction. Over half of all UK universities³, and over 1,485 institutions globally representing over \$39.2 trillion in assets have already committed to going fossil free⁴.

Some investment funds are waking up to the fact they need to divest from other high-emissions companies too – including industrial livestock. For instance, Australian Ethical, which has \$5.4 billion in funds under management, has a policy of not investing in large-scale commercial animal agriculture⁵. De Volksbank, the fourth largest banking group in the Netherlands which manages €37 billion in savings, has a policy of avoiding investments in livestock farming because of links to issues of food security, climate change, biodiversity, health and human rights⁶. Thirty

financial institutions, collectively with \$8.7 trillion in assets under management, recently committed to eliminate agricultural commodity-driven deforestation from their portfolios by 2025, including from soya and cattle⁷.

Other funds have divested from individual industrial livestock companies: like Nordea Asset Management which recently divested from JBS over deforestation links, selling €40 million in shares⁸, and Legal & General Investment Management, Britain’s biggest asset manager, which divested from industrial dairy company China Mengniu Dairy in 2021 over their “insufficient” response to climate change⁹. Many UK retail responsible funds currently avoid industrial livestock (see below).

Divestment from industrial livestock is currently less widespread than fossil-fuel divestment, but will become inevitable if we are to deal with climate change, deforestation and the other risks posed by industrial livestock.

Photo credit: branislavpudar / Shutterstock.com



WHY DIVEST FROM INDUSTRIAL LIVESTOCK? THE ETHICAL CASE

Climate change and deforestation: Livestock are responsible for about 14.5% of the total annual anthropogenic (human-caused) greenhouse gas emissions globally¹⁰. The world's biggest five meat and dairy companies combined emit more greenhouse gases than ExxonMobil¹¹. And if current growth trends continue, the global meat and dairy industry will account for almost half the world's 1.5°C emissions budget by 2030 – that is, the amount of emissions we can safely emit to stay within 1.5°C of global heating¹². Meat, aquaculture, eggs, and dairy also already use about 83% of the world's farmland, despite providing only 37% of our protein and 18% of our calories¹³. This isn't just grassland – 40% of the world's cropland is used to grow animal feed¹⁴. This makes the growing livestock sector and its demand for animal feeds such as soya the biggest driver of agricultural land use expansion, and thus deforestation – causing tragic biodiversity loss and grave implications for climate change. The growth of industrial livestock must be reversed to achieve a future safe from climate crisis whilst also sustainably feeding the world's people.

Pandemic risks and health: Scientists recently warned that intensive livestock farming creates the “perfect breeding ground” for the development of viruses¹⁵. Highly concentrated numbers of animals found in large-scale intensive farming are more susceptible to infection and increase the risk of emergence of more virulent disease strains¹⁶. The over-use and misuse of antibiotics in industrial livestock is rampant, used to prop up low welfare practices and keep stressed animals alive. 70% of the world's antibiotics are used on farmed animals and increase the risk of the development of antibiotic-resistant superbugs found in supermarket chicken¹⁷, or flu viruses such as H5N1¹⁸. Industrial livestock has also been associated with outbreaks of diseases such as African Swine Fever, which in a recent outbreak in China led to the culling of 200 million pigs¹⁹ and \$100 billion in economic losses²⁰. Fine particulate matter (air pollution) from food production causes 15,900 deaths per year in the US – and livestock production has been found to cause 80% of these deaths, with beef production having particularly high impacts on air quality²¹. 60% of UK particulate air pollution, which cause £8 billion a year in health damage, is from ammonia from farms – particularly from livestock manure²². The high-meat diets promoted by industrial livestock companies also damage our health significantly. An Oxford University study found that reducing

average meat consumption in the UK to two to three servings per person per week could prevent 45,000 premature deaths per year and reduce NHS costs by £1.2 billion per year²³.

Human rights: Industrial livestock frequently displaces communities, destroys forests, depletes soils and pollutes the environment – at the expense of small farmers and Indigenous communities²⁴. For instance, Amnesty International found that cattle farming is the main driver of illegal land seizures that violate human rights in Reserves and Indigenous territories in Brazil's Amazon rainforest²⁵. In the UK, 110,000 livestock and poultry farms went out of business between 1990 and 2016, a 34% decline²⁶, whilst over 800 US-style “megafarms” became established²⁷. Studies on meat packing plants and slaughterhouses also regularly find evidence of high rates of injury and poor mental health²⁸, and low-pay and exploitation of migrant labour is rife in the industry.

Animal welfare: Industrial livestock companies represent the worst kind of meat and dairy production. They tend to rely on very intensive farming systems – often referred to as “factory farming” – characterized by high-density stocking of animals. Factory farms squash billions of genetically identical animals into stressful, barren environments, with no access to outdoor space or natural light. From the day they are born until the day they die, the animals suffer. The cramped conditions and stressful environments mean that animals can't behave according to their natural instincts. Instead, many experience behavioural issues like aggression, cage-biting, chewing continuously on nothing until frothing at the mouth, feather pecking or cannibalism.

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Photo: Panoramic drone aerial view of Xingu Indigenous Park territory and soybean farms in the Amazon rainforest, Mato Grosso, Brazil. Concept of deforestation, agriculture, global warming and environment. **Credit:** PARALAXIS / Shutterstock

HOW LOCAL AUTHORITIES CAN HAVE AN IMPACT THROUGH DIVESTMENT

By divesting from industrial livestock, local authorities can clearly and publicly demonstrate that they are committed to a sustainable, healthy future for all – including those who are worst affected by climate change.

Divestment by local authorities has high potential to impact industrial livestock companies. Announcements of divestment carry high reputational damage to the target company. For industrial livestock, the impact of divestment announcements is likely to be particularly high – first movers are likely to gain a lot of attention because so few institutions have divested. Reputational damage from divestment erodes the industry’s moral legitimacy, paving the way with policymakers and the public towards greater regulation of the industry. For instance, researchers have found that the fossil fuel divestment movement shifted the debate away from individual actions, opened space for radical, structural change, and enabled marginal ideas such as carbon taxes to gain traction and legitimacy²⁹.

It sends a strong message to divest from companies that are not moving to sustainable and ethical practices especially given the

use of public tax money for these investments. Divestment sends a precedent for standards of public money investment – including not just public bank investments, but also government subsidies to industrial livestock.

Divestment by local authorities also has a potential domino effect to influence bigger players like the big investment funds, many of whom have been convinced to act by the fossil fuel divestment movement. Large-scale divestment has potential to materially impact industrial livestock companies by pushing down their share prices and increasing their cost of capital¹. We can see examples of this from the fossil fuel divestment movement: Shell now lists divestment as a material risk within its annual report³⁰. When the world’s largest sovereign wealth fund, Norway’s \$1.1 trillion Government Pension Fund, announced its plans to divest from oil and gas last year, 134 companies experienced a plunge of £130m from their combined stock market value³¹.

Local authorities can make a real and tangible impact through divestment.

¹When companies are perceived as riskier investments, higher interest rates will be charged by investors for loans to offset this risk. This relates to bonds, rather than shares.

DIVESTMENT FROM INDUSTRIAL LIVESTOCK IS NOT RISKY

Local government pension funds have a legal responsibility, known as “fiduciary duty”, to invest in the best interests of their fund members. Industrial livestock divestment is fully in line with this fiduciary duty for several reasons.

Firstly, the £238 million that local authority pension funds have invested in industrial livestock companies is only about 0.1% of their total investments. This means that divestment from industrial livestock would have no substantial impact on the value of local authority pension funds – it is “financially immaterial” to the performance of local authority pensions. This makes the decision to divest from industrial livestock a lot easier for local authorities, as selling off investments doesn’t affect value of the pension fund substantially and it is easy to replace these small investments.

Secondly, investments in industrial livestock hurt rather than enhance performance. There is growing recognition that fossil fuels investments are likely to become “stranded assets”. For instance, UK public pensions have lost £2 billion on oil investments in the last 4 years³². A recent study found that half of the world’s fossil fuel assets, worth \$11 trillion, could become worthless by 2036³³. If governments take the necessary action to decarbonise our food system, industrial livestock will become stranded assets too. Governments around the world are beginning to realise that industrial livestock industry at its current scale is incompatible with a safe future for people and planet.

Every route to the UK meeting net zero modelled by the Committee on Climate Change – the UK government’s top climate advisers – includes a transition to 20-50% lower meat consumption, with the CCC calling it “particularly important”³⁴. The National Food Strategy – the first independent review of England’s entire food system for 75 years, commissioned by the government – recommends that the UK transition to 30% less meat consumption by 2030³⁵. Pressure is rising for regulation of industrial livestock to stem its contribution to global emissions, deforestation, nitrates pollution, human rights violations, and industrial-scale animal cruelty. And although there is a fierce political backlash to this from industrial livestock companies, it is

clear the tide will and must change. For instance, the Netherlands is currently looking at proposals to reduce livestock numbers by 30% to deal with the “nitrogen crisis” caused by manures³⁶. France has recently required all state-run canteens to have at least one daily vegetarian choice, and now requires schools to have one day a week with meat off the menu³⁷.

Public institutions are also beginning to take action. Some of the UK’s biggest public caterers have pledged to reduce the amount of meat on their menus by 20%, whilst sourcing better quality, locally-sourced produce for the meat that is served¹. Whilst emerging markets are seen by many investors as the main drivers of growth in meat demand, this will not necessarily be the case. In 2016, the Chinese government set out a plan to reduce its citizens’ meat consumption by 50% by 2030 to reduce emissions, pollution and obesity¹. It estimates that meeting the targets would reduce greenhouse gas emissions from China’s livestock industry by 1 billion tonnes by 2030, from a projected 1.8 billion tonnes¹, and thus may be key to China reaching its commitment to peak emissions in 2030. Limiting meat consumption growth is likely to be a core criteria for those countries seeking mitigation and adaptation funding from donor governments.

Conversely, if governments take insufficient action on climate change, allowing industrial livestock to grow unabated, then the huge potential disruptions caused by climate change will cause instability and shocks in the global economy which threaten the stability of all investments. Local authorities have a responsibility to their members not to invest in companies which make this kind of future more likely. To serve their members, pension funds should be looking for strong and reliable returns over a long-term period.

There is no scenario where investing in industrial livestock contributes positively to pension fund performance. Divestment from industrial livestock allows pension funds to send a clear message that governments need to take action on limiting industrial livestock, which will enhance overall performance not detract from it.

WHY ENGAGEMENT WITH INDUSTRIAL LIVESTOCK COMPANIES WILL NOT GO FAR ENOUGH

Engagement with industrial livestock companies to improve their practices is a dead-end for a few reasons.

Many local authority pension fund investments in industrial livestock companies are in the form of bonds. Vitally, bond-holders do not have any say over how the company is run, so divestment is the only way investors can express disapproval of a company's sustainability. Engagement is not an option.

Ownership of shares does in theory entitle shareholders to have some influence over how the company is run. However, it is extremely unlikely that local authority pension funds holding shares will have influence through engagement with industrial livestock companies. Most of the industrial livestock companies listed in this report are "closely held", which means the majority of the company's shares are owned by a few individuals, not publicly traded⁴¹ – so minority shareholders, even collectively, can have limited influence. Local authority pension funds usually hold comparatively very few shares in these industrial livestock companies, compounding this problem. The majority (67%) of UK local authority investments in industrial livestock are through indirect investment vehicles, such as actively managed and passive investment funds. This gives councils even less leverage with companies, because the amount they hold tends to be even smaller, and it may be more difficult to tell which companies each fund is invested in⁴².

Currently, industrial livestock companies show no sign of wanting to, or being capable of reform – and certainly not in the timescales needed to avert climate crisis. There are biological limits to how much the emissions intensity of livestock production can be reduced. A 2018 study of over 40,000 farms revealed that even the very lowest impact meat and dairy products still almost always cause much more environmental harm than the highest impact vegetable and cereal products⁴³. Reducing emissions intensity also usually comes at a cost: such as intensive production systems with lower animal welfare and higher risks of the emergence of anti-biotic resistant bacteria and pandemics, greater concentrations of manure with associated increases in water pollution and ammonia and nitrous oxide emissions, and high energy density animal feeds like soya which often carry deforestation risks. Historically, squeezing greater efficiency out of livestock has often meant pushing the bodies of animals to their limits – whether that be animals which grow to slaughter weight

far faster than naturally, or packing lots of animals into cramped indoor facilities. Industrial livestock systems offer fewer cost-effective opportunities for substantial emissions reductions because they have already intensified⁴⁴.

A recent report found that of the world's 35 largest industrial livestock companies, only six have targets to reduce their "Scope 3" supply chain emissions (where the vast majority of livestock emissions occur) and they are all pushing for growth in production and exports, which will increase their Scope 3 emissions⁴⁵. In these cases, targets are usually to reduce emissions *intensity* (emissions per kg of meat or dairy), which are undermined by increasing production (more kg produced) so overall emissions increase. Between 1961 and 2010, the average global GHG emissions *per kilogram* of chicken decreased to between one third and one half since 1961; alongside this the total GHG emissions from chicken production in 2010 were up to 5 times higher, because 11 times more chickens were produced⁴⁶. The cheap, mass produced meat of industrial livestock drives this growth – and is reflected in company strategies.

JBS – the world's largest industrial livestock company, based in Brazil – told its shareholders that a pillar of its strategy is a projected 30% increase in per capita meat consumption by 2030 compared to 1999⁴⁷. Even where a minority of industrial livestock companies have begun to diversify into meat and dairy alternatives, like plant-based burgers, they make it clear that they consider this an additional extra, and not a substitute for the continued growth of their main livestock business. For instance, Fonterra – the world's largest dairy exporter – has dipped its hoof into alt-milks whilst still aiming to increase its milk production by 40% between 2015 and 2025⁴⁸. Tyson has spoken excitedly about the growth of the alternative protein market⁴⁹, but still predicts an average 3-4% annual growth from beef and poultry sales⁵⁰. Just as fossil fuel companies have spread climate misinformation and lobbied against effective policies⁵¹, an investigation by DeSmog recently found that the livestock industry has been spending millions lobbying against any transitions to lower-meat diets which might limit their growth, and spreading misinformation downplaying the impacts of meat⁵². An UnEarthed investigation found that a coalition of meat industry associations pressured the UN Food Systems Summit to promote factory farming and an expansion in global meat consumption⁵³.

The primary aim of large industrial livestock corporations, which is hardwired into everything they do, is to deliver profits and growth to their shareholders. Since these corporations have so much invested in industrial livestock production – land, farm buildings, processing factories, institutional knowledge and other infrastructure – they have a huge structural imperative to defend the growth of their industry, just as with fossil fuel companies who do not want to risk “stranded assets”. The business model and interests of big livestock companies is at odds with a safe future for our world.

Local authorities who really want to engage with food companies to oppose industrial livestock would be far better spending their energy influencing retailers and caterers whose core business is not so locked into industrial livestock, and are in a strong position to switch procurement practices to less and better meat.

It is also important to remember that divestment also does not preclude engagement – either as an investor who has shown they mean business by partially divesting and threatening to fully divest if adequate change does not occur, or as a prospective investor to be won back.

For more on the case for divestment from industrial livestock, see Feedback’s report ‘Big Livestock vs. The Planet’.

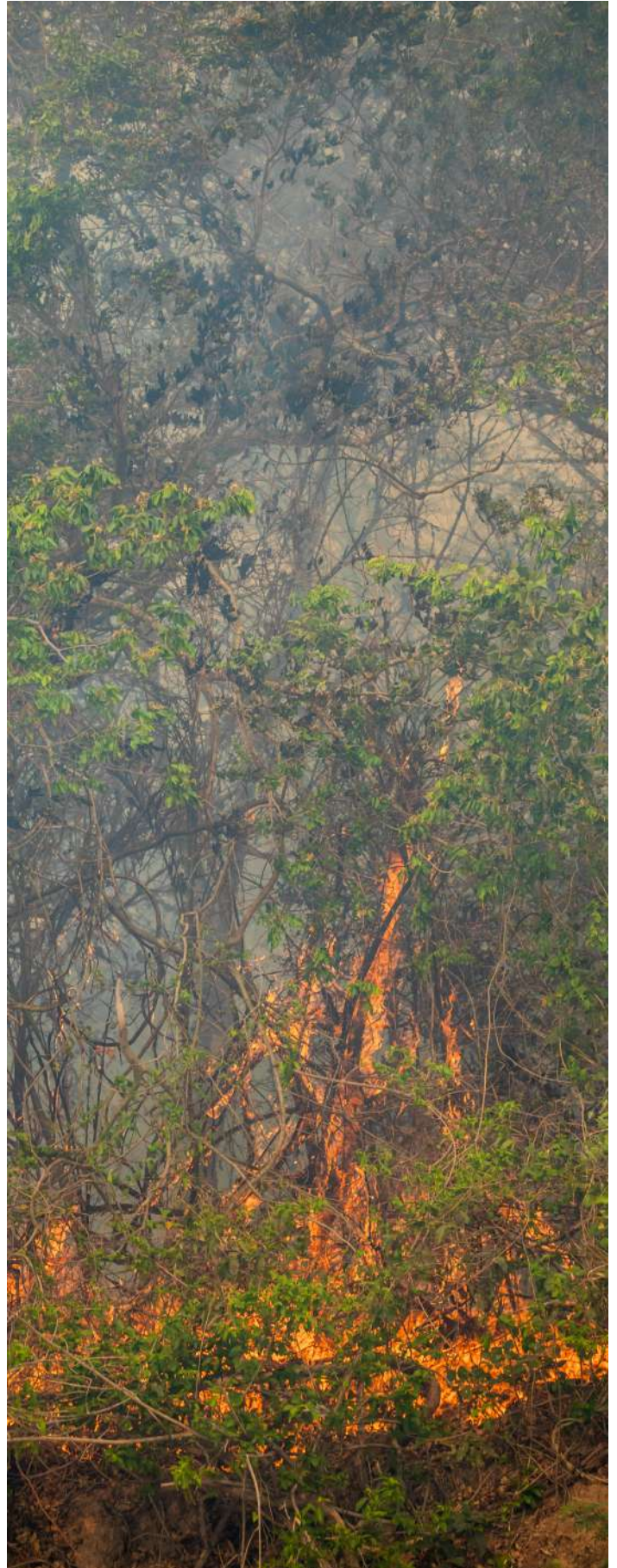


Photo: Fire returns in the Pantanal area where it had already been controlled. The region's extreme drought and strong winds make it difficult for the brigades to control it. Birds can fly away from burned areas, but the impacts of inhaled smoke can be fatal. As well as the lack of food in the devastated areas. **Credit:** World Animal Protection / Noelly Castro

HOW TO DIVEST

The most immediate and straightforward way local authority pension funds can divest from industrial livestock is to transfer their money out of their direct investments in industrial livestock – both bond and shares – and invest instead in sustainable alternatives, either through international markets or locally in the community (see below).

Where local authority pension funds are invested through indirect investment vehicles, including actively managed and passive investment funds, it may be more complex to divest from industrial livestock companies. The important thing is for councils to begin this journey and commit to a deadline for divestment. Although there are more existing fossil-free funds available to local authorities, industrial livestock-free funds have been created for individual investors which are replicable for local authorities. Many UK retail responsible funds currently avoid industrial livestock, searchable via [Fund EcoMarket](#)². For instance, Aegon Asset Management offer a variety of funds (in equity and bonds) for pensions like the Aviva Aegon Ethical Equity Pn S6 which ethically exclude “producers or retailers of meat, poultry, fish or dairy products or slaughterhouse by-products”⁵⁴. Scottish Widows (Zurich) Henderson Global Sustainable Equity ZP (available for

pensions) says that it avoids investing in businesses associated with “Intensive farming & meat production”⁵⁵. These retail funds are available for individual investors only – not to institutional investors like local authority pensions funds. However, they provide a model which can be imitated:

- If your LGPS has a passively managed fund, your Pension Fund Committee can ask their investment consultant to find a fund which excludes industrial livestock companies to invest in.
- If your LGPS has an actively managed fund, your Pension Fund Committee can ask their investment consultant to approach active fund managers to create a fund for them which excludes industrial livestock, pointing to the UK retail responsible funds as an example.

Pension funds beginning to divest from investment funds with high exposure to industrial livestock companies will send a strong signal to investment funds that they need to start treating industrial livestock like fossil fuel companies, and screening them out of their portfolios – helping make it easier for pension funds to divest fully in the future.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DIVESTING BONDS AND SHARES?

Both direct and indirect investments can be in bonds or shares.

Bonds are a type of investment which represents a loan, which usually funds a business expanding its operations in some way – in this case, the expansion of industrial livestock. The buyer of the bond is entitled to repayment after a certain number of years, and to interest payments paid annually. Many council investments in industrial livestock companies are in the form of bonds. Local authority pension funds can therefore choose not to renew their bonds in industrial livestock companies, when they come up for renewal. Or even better local authorities can immediately defund these bonds, if they will not be renewing them anyway. Long dated bonds are also risky investments.

Shares are a type of investment which represents part-ownership of a company. Shares in a company are riskier for investors because their value can go down as well as up – fluctuating with the value of the company. Local authority pension funds can sell off their shares at any time.

² On the Fund EcoMarket homepage, simply search for the funds cited here – or to search for more, scroll down to the “Policies, Issues and Themes” section - select topics relevant to industrial livestock such as “Animal welfare policy” and “Deforestation / palm oil policy”, and then search for funds with the fund name left blank. Clicking on “More info” next to each fund, you can see if they have a specific policy to exclude industrial livestock.

INVESTMENTS FOR GOOD: ALTERNATIVES TO INDUSTRIAL LIVESTOCK

Investments in sustainable companies can yield strong and reliable returns, without the risks associated with industrial livestock. Several recent studies, including one by Blackrock, the largest asset manager in the world, have found that sustainable funds delivered higher returns than traditional funds⁵⁶. In England and Wales, the Law Commission has issued guidance to trustees who might be worried about breaching fiduciary duty by considering climate and other ethical risks, saying that “there are no legal or regulatory barriers to social investment” and “it is possible to do well and do good at the same time.”⁵⁷

Invest sustainably – outside of the food system

There are many sustainable sectors to invest in as an alternative to industrial livestock – ranging from renewable energy to heat pumps and sustainable transport – which can be directly invested in. Since the volumes of money invested in industrial livestock are such a small proportion of council investments, it is not a big challenge to find alternatives. Another alternative is for councils to invest in their local community. 60% of the LGPS was invested internally in the UK as recently as thirty years ago – a figure which has dropped to only 30% in 2018. Councils could reverse this trend and start using their pension funds to invest more in their local communities’ future, building community wealth. For example, some UK councils have invested in local wind energy or community-owned solar power cooperatives⁵⁸.

FOSTER THE CREATION OF A RESILIENT, SUSTAINABLE REGIONAL FOOD ECONOMY








There are also many things councils can do to invest in local sustainable food systems. For instance, the number of County Farms – farms owned by local authorities – has halved in the last 40 years⁵⁹. These County Farms can serve a vital community function. They are let out to young and first-time farmers, sometimes at below-market rents, and operate as are a vital entry-point for young farmers to get into farming in a sector which requires high up-front capital costs. County Farms could be used to create a just transition for farmers producing less and better meat – supporting new entrants to get into sustainable plant-based food production, ecosystem restoration, or smaller-scale agro-ecologically produced high-welfare animal farming, embedded within regional food economies. For instance, Dorset Council’s climate action plan includes working with County Farm tenants to introduce low-carbon farming practices⁶⁰. Cornwall Council’s climate change plan states “We will make our Council Farms exemplars in low carbon and regenerative agriculture”⁶¹.

Councils can also support the shift to a resilient, sustainable regional food economy through public procurement. For instance, Enfield are the first local authority to commit to only vegetarian and vegan foods at onsite events, and Camden and Havering are reducing meat served in schools and introducing more plant-based alternatives⁶². Councils can also take measures to source local sustainably produced high-welfare meat, where it is served. Public procurement and public education can be powerful tools to help society shift towards less and better meat.

THE TIME IS NOW

Many of the UK’s councils have now declared a climate emergency. As we aim to “build back better” from the coronavirus pandemic, and in this defining decade to avert climate crisis, now is the time for councils to do everything they can to build a safe future for their communities. For the majority of councils, their largest greenhouse gas emissions will come from their pension fund investments⁶³. Divestment can take time – often up to 5 years – so the time to start this process is now.

WHAT ACTION CAN COUNCILLORS TAKE?

-  Explore your LGPS fund's industrial livestock investments using this online tool from [Feedback](#) and [World Animal Protection](#) or contact divestbiglivestock@feedbackglobal.org for more detailed data.
-  Pledge your support for industrial livestock divestment – just email us at divestbiglivestock@feedbackglobal.org and we will add you to a UK-wide list of councillors supportive of the movement.
-  Link up with other local supportive councillors and industrial livestock divestment campaigners in your constituency, and schedule a meeting to discuss potential collaboration. Email divestbiglivestock@feedbackglobal.org and we will do our best to connect you.
-  Share this policy briefing with your colleagues on the Pension Fund Committee, and other colleagues who may be interested. Engage with them to discuss the issue.
-  Join your council's Pension Fund Committee, or request a meeting with them to discuss industrial livestock divestment
-  Propose a divestment motion to full council, calling on the council to end further investment in industrial livestock and divest funding holdings within a defined period (often 3-5 years) and calling on the council's pension fund to divest.
-  Want advice and support? Contact divestbiglivestock@feedbackglobal.org and we will do our best to help.

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