menu
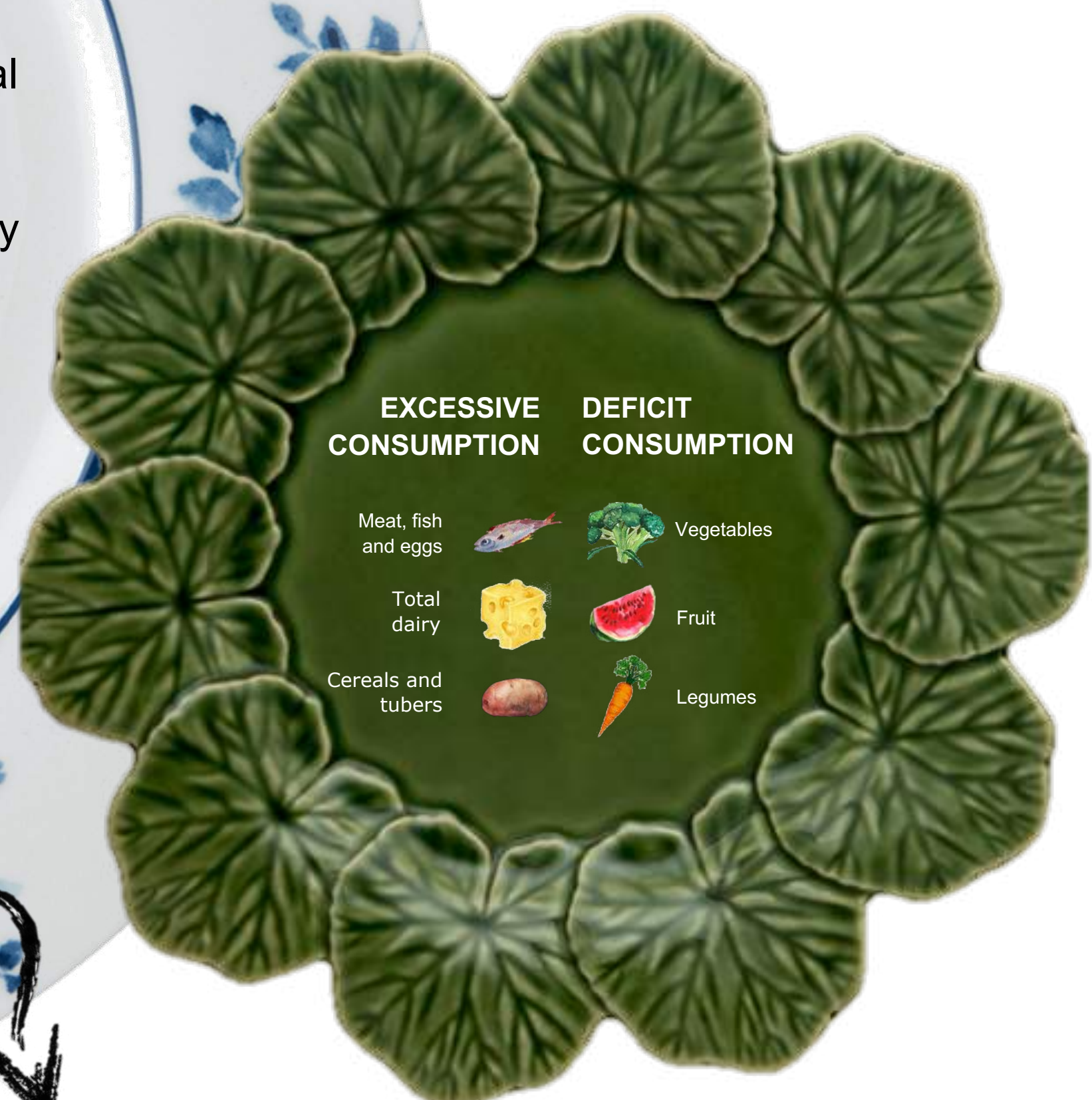
how to trigger transitions towards more
Sustainable and Healthier Diets

Chefs

Catarina Possidónio
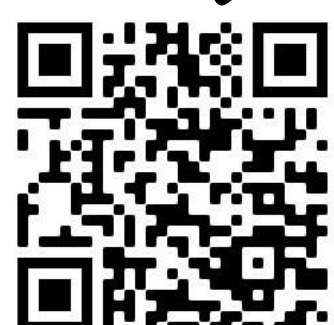crpsa@iscte-iul.pt
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Appetizer

Meat consumption impacts all aspects of human life and humanity's long-term survival prospects. Despite this knowledge, society continues to ignore the negative impact of consuming meat, which includes excessively high contributions to global greenhouse gas emissions, land and water pollution and depletion, negative impacts on human health and ethical challenges.

EXCESSIVE CONSUMPTION
Meat, fish and eggs
Total dairy
Cereals and tubers

DEFICIT CONSUMPTION
Vegetables
Fruit
Legumes

A way to address the health and sustainability concerns with the current food systems is to shift away from current levels of consumption of animal-sourced products, especially meat, toward an increase of plant-based foods.

Main Courses

In order to add knowledge on how to trigger these transitions, the current body of work aimed to analyze the way people perceive:

(A) the origin of meat, the **animals** alive, uncut, sentient

Examining how animal categorizations (e.g., mammals; pets) and pet attachment affect animal evaluations

Study 1 and 2

(B) animals as **meat** products, not as living animals but as food

Examining the role of product familiarity and animal resemblance on meat appetite

Study 3

(C) **meat** and **alternatives** to meat consumption

Testing the role of presenting meat alternatives in a meal framing vs. isolated

Study 4

Study 1

Method

509 participants   **55%**

TASK: Evaluate 120 animals from 12 biological categories (e.g., mammals, insects) in 11 dimensions (e.g., valence, arousal, edibility, cuteness, capacity to think, moral concern

ANIMALS as LIVING BEINGS

Results

Mammals had the most favorable attributions

Arachnids had the most negative attributions

Women / Meat avoiders / Pet owners → evaluated animals more positively ← Men / Omnivores Meat reducers / Non owners

Provided normative ratings for a broad set of animals that can be used by researchers from different areas.

Study 2

Method

376 participants   **54%**

TASK: Evaluate pets, farmed animals, predators and pests in 11 dimensions; Pet Attachment Scale

Pets as ambassadors?
Positive relationships with pets have the potential to develop and expand concern for other animals

Results

Pets were the most positive category; benefited the most by pet attachment

Farmed Animals and **Predators** benefited substantially in terms of the aesthetic and moral judgments by participants with pet attachment

Pests were the least benefited; even so were ascribed higher capacity to feel and greater concern for their treatment

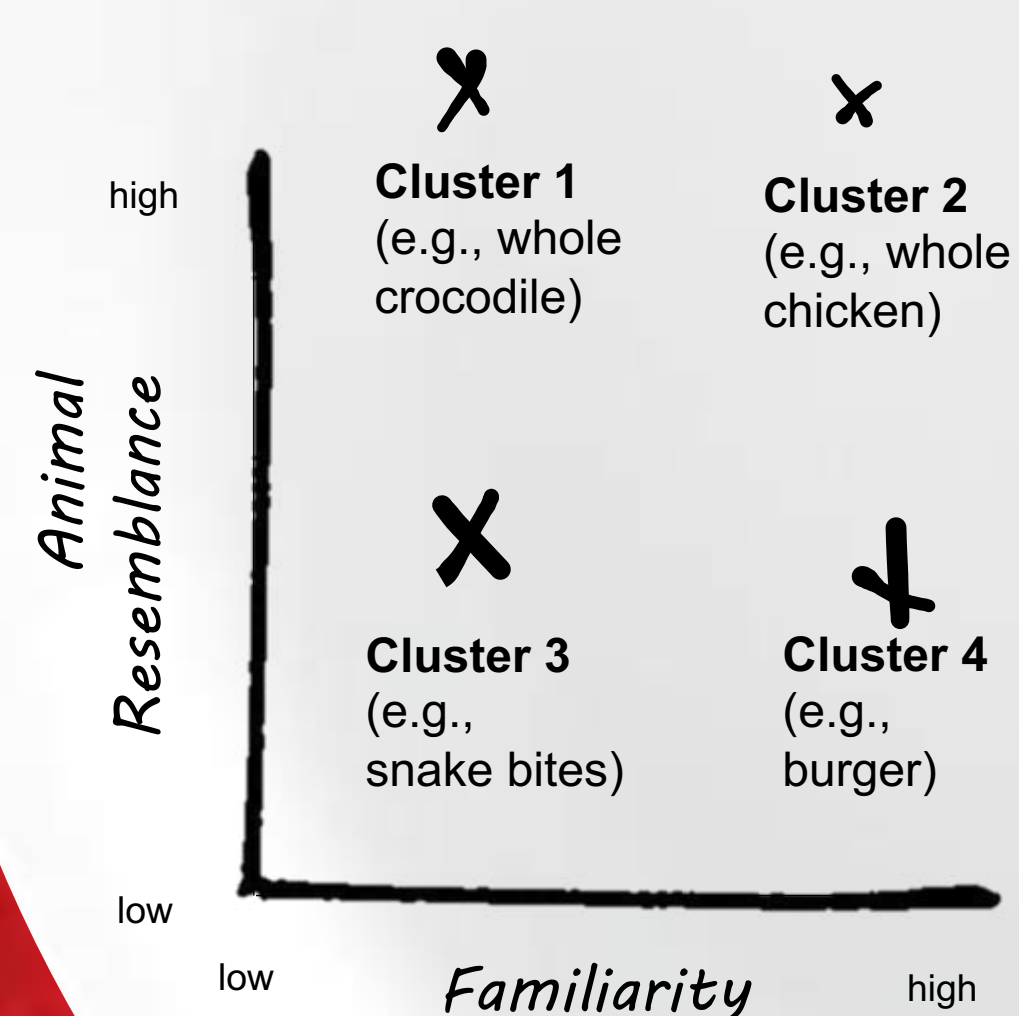## Study 3

ANIMALS as MEAT PRODUCTS

Method

249 participants   **68%**

TASK:
Evaluate 28 images (naturally varying in familiarity and animal resemblance) in familiarity, animal resemblance and appetite + free-association task ("What is the first thing you think about when you see this image?")

Results

Animal Resemblance (high / low) vs. Familiarity (low / high)

Cluster 1 (e.g., whole crocodile)
Cluster 2 (e.g., whole chicken)
Cluster 3 (e.g., snake bites)
Cluster 4 (e.g., burger)

Clusters defined by high familiarity evoked more positive valenced associations and higher appetite ratings than low familiar clusters

Both **familiarity** and **animal resemblance** were dimensions that have an independent relationship on appetite ratings. However, familiarity revealed a much larger relationship with appetite than animal resemblance.

Study 4

Method

138 participants **58%**   **285** participants **68%**

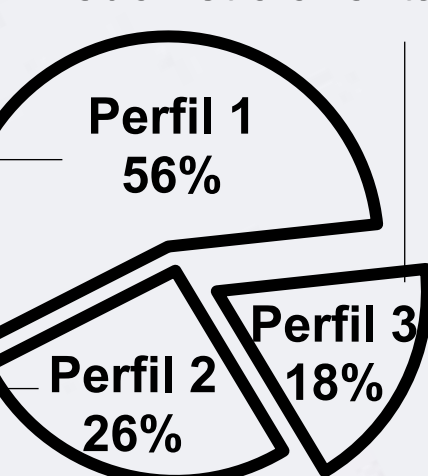**TASK:** Evaluate meat and alternatives (meal framing vs. product isolated)

MEAT and MEAT ALTERNATIVES

Results

MEAT
Meat-avoiders ethic and (plant-based) hedonistic orientations

Meat-eaters hedonistic orientations
Perfil 1 56%
Perfil 3 18%
Perfil 2 26%
Meat-eaters health orientation

MEAT ALTERNATIVES

		Product appraisal
Low familiar	Lab-meat / Tofu	Meal framing > Product framing
	≠	
High familiar	Legumes	Meal framing < Product framing

Meal framing might promote more positive appraisals on low familiar meat substitutes.

Dessert

With this body of work we aimed to develop more insights to inform audiences interested in promoting more sustainable, healthier, plant-based diets.