School Lunch 2050

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Imagining desirable visions of the future that galvanize support and build consensus is critical for catalyzing social change for sustainability. When visions of the future are contested, the forms and targets of future visions, and the underlying knowledge types expressed and activated by future visions become important factors in determining which visions "stick" in the social imaginary. In this presentation, we explore the potential of affect and embodied knowledge in expanding our receptiveness and motivation for sustainable change through the School Lunch 2050 virtual exhibit (kyushoku2050.org) developed by the FEAST Project (RIHN). Food practices are unique in that they are intimately tied to our bodies— eating and cooking, for example, are sensuous experiences that can engage all five of our senses. Food is also embedded in our everyday lifeworlds, which would suggest that future visions of food and food practices are more tangible and easier to relate to when compared with futures with more abstract qualities. As part of the School Lunch 2050 exhibition, four lunch menus were conceived from four plausible future climate and food trade scenarios in the Japanese context. The four meals were then created using realistic looking plastic food often found in restaurant windows in Japan to entice hungry customers. The exhibit has been displayed at public events and, due to COVID restrictions, online. Through the exhibit, we argue that emphasizing embodied knowledge and affect as part of future visions can "persuade" the public in ways that overt appeals to logic and values can not. We suggest that more research is needed on the effect of sensuous immersion in possible, desirable futures.

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Over the past twenty years, Max SPIEGELBERG has engaged questions of sustainability, environment and humanity across boundaries of disciplines, cultures, & skills in various positions and countries. His interest lies with integrated and participatory approaches applied to beekeepers & pollinators policies, informal/urban/civic food, and food futures. Since March 2022 Max works as coordinator of the UNESCO Chair on World Heritage and Biosphere Reserve Observation and Education at the Heidelberg University for Education (spiegelberg@ph-heidelberg.de) and he is founding member and co-director of the FEAST NPO in Kyoto, Japan (mirainoshoku@gmail.com).