Reviewer’s report

Title: National, regional, and global trends in overweight and obesity

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Reviewer: Boyd Swinburn

Reviewer’s report:

This is a very impressive study and the authors are to be congratulated for this enormous and important piece of work. There is so much information in the paper that there is a lot to digest and many implications which cannot all be explored in the paper but will no doubt come once these country comparisons get into the public realm.

I only have two (discretionary) suggestions.

There are many reasons for developing a global monitoring system for obesity and I would have put looking for ‘thresholds’ in less commonly associated conditions towards the end of the list with other reasons up higher, such as: estimating current and future burdens; evaluating the impacts of national efforts to reduce obesity; identifying outliers (surprisingly high or low prevalence or change in prevalence) which may be fruitful case studies on determinants and solutions; for ecological analyses to explain the vast range of prevalence, and; as a valuable tool for advocacy.

These large differences in prevalence and trends by country and region are likely to be explained by several determinants (including economic, physical environment etc) but the obvious areas of socio-cultural influences on food, physical activity and body size have, for some reason, been almost totally ignored by researchers and these impressive results could be used for a stronger call for more research into socio-cultural factors.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests