Reviewer's report

Title: Curbing the lifestyle disease pandemic: making progress on an interdisciplinary research agenda for law and policy interventions

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Reviewer: Charlotte Godziewski

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The research agenda piece highlights the importance of interdisciplinarity and coordination between health sciences, policy-making and law, and IR theories with respect to tackling the global burden of non-communicable disease (NCDs). After providing an overview of the scope of NCD burden worldwide and reiterating the major behavioural risk factors linked to the growing incidence of these diseases, the authors point out a lack of concrete tools to translate the available evidence and policy recommendations into laws and policies on both national and international levels. The authors argue for the need to develop a comprehensive overview of the links between health science evidence and law and policy research. Additionally, they call for more evidence to better understand the forces, for example normative ones, triggering policy-processes by driving agenda-setting, framing, diffusion and implementation of policies.

The paper is very well written, in a clear, concise and correct way.

The authors address an important issue and make a valid point when identifying the dispersed nature of the every several NCD policy agenda, and when talking about the importance of interdisciplinary coordination to generate best practices and guidelines for tackling NCDs. However, they seem to have neglected a considerable part of existing knowledge on the topic, which renders the argument perhaps less novel and arguably less useful than it could have been.

As an example, an important ongoing debate on the actual usefulness of 'nudge' policies was not mentioned. It would have provided a necessary, more complete picture of the current literature on the topic and would have said something about the potential reasons why there exists no universal guideline on legal nudging interventions to tackle NCDs. Many scholars (including Michael Marmot and Tim Lang, for example) have been critical towards regulations addressing solely consumer behaviour without taking into account the role of social determinants of health. The WHO NCD 2013-2020 action plan may in fact be moving away from a one-size-fits-all legal prescription precisely to allow the different countries space to take into account varying structural contexts. It is unfortunate that the article doesn't reflect on more holistic conceptualisation of NCD prevention.
In conclusion, it appears to me that the authors may not have considered sufficiently the existing literature on the topic, missing out both on acknowledging research in the public health field that already addresses the advocated research agenda, and on becoming aware of important evolutions of the debate more broadly. My opinion is that the paper would greatly benefit from demonstrating finer cognizance of the current debates in their complexity, and of the different existing ideas before situating and presenting a more focused research agenda.

To name a few examples, I would recommend authors like Alberto Alemanno, Amandine Garde, Corinna Hawkes, Tim Lang, Geof Rayner, Michael Marmot, Tim Lobstein, Adam Burgess, Franco Sassi, Michele Cecchini, et al. The lancet has a special NCD Action Group that published papers on relevant issues. Additionally, I also recommend readings like 'Health in All Policies - Seizing opportunities, implementing policies' by Leppo K., Ollila A., Peña S., et al. (2013), for it addresses the agenda setting and policy processes angle as well as the NCD risk factors angle specifically. Finally, the WHO's recently published report entitled "Key considerations for the use of law to prevent noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) in the WHO European Region" (2017), or the WHO/OECD/PAHO report "Applying modeling to improve health and economic policy decision in the Americas - the case of noncommunicable diseases" (2015) are further examples of important contributions to consider for this article.

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