Reviewer’s report

Title: Measuring and stimulating progress on implementing widely recommended food environment policies: The New Zealand case study

Version: 0 Date: 01 Nov 2017

Reviewer: Femke van Nassau

Reviewer’s report:

The manuscript describes the process of using the Food-EPI to assess degree of implementation of food environment policies in New Zealand, including a comparison to 2014 data. The manuscript is important in its field as it addresses the difficulty of assessing policy implementation and provides recommendations for action. The paper is well written and I have only minor comments for the authors.

- It is unclear to me what 'international best practices' were used or how that list was composed. Are they part of the Food-EPI or drawn from the Benchmarking food environments 2017, or something else?

- In the methods section (p4-5) the authors explain that 3 groups of participants were recruited (i.e. public health experts, public health non-governmental organizations, and government experts), whilst in the results section only the distinction between independent and government is made. Please explain.

- Results section p10, line 235-245 provides a list of who would be responsible for the listed actions. What data is this based on? And would it be better suited in the discussion section?

- Use of scientific publications in the reference list is limited. This is also reflected in the discussion section> the discussion section now mainly repeats results. The manuscript would benefit from comparison with other scientific literature in the discussion section, as well as comparison with Food-EPI scores from other countries (beyond Australia).

- Ref 14 is listed as in press, whilst 2014 is noted as publication year. Is this correct?

- Ref 20 refers to a Google drive document. Will this link keep on working in the future? And how much overlap is there between the ref 20 report and this paper?

- Could the authors elaborate on what implementation actions are planned for the top priorities as listed in Table 1? Or was that not part of this project?

- Supplement 2 uses a lot of abbreviations that are not explained in the document.

Level of interest
Please indicate how interesting you found the manuscript:

An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

**Declaration of competing interests**
Please complete a declaration of competing interests, considering the following questions:

1. Have you in the past five years received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

2. Do you hold any stocks or shares in an organisation that may in any way gain or lose financially from the publication of this manuscript, either now or in the future?

3. Do you hold or are you currently applying for any patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

4. Have you received reimbursements, fees, funding, or salary from an organization that holds or has applied for patents relating to the content of the manuscript?

5. Do you have any other financial competing interests?

6. Do you have any non-financial competing interests in relation to this paper?

If you can answer no to all of the above, write 'I declare that I have no competing interests' below. If your reply is yes to any, please give details below.

I declare that I have no competing interests

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal. I understand that my name will be included on my report to the authors and, if the manuscript is accepted for publication, my named report including any attachments I upload will be posted on the website along with the authors' responses. I agree for my report to be made available under an Open Access Creative Commons CC-BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). I understand that any comments which I do not wish to be included in my named report can be included as confidential comments to the editors, which will not be published.

I agree to the open peer review policy of the journal