

Food Loss and Waste Reduction in Europe and Central Asia

Regional Conference “Enabling the change”

5-6 October 2022

Istanbul, Türkiye

Concept Note

Context

The environmental sustainability of the global food system is at risk from increasing demand for food from a growing world population combined with dietary changes associated with rising incomes. Against this background, food loss and waste prevention and reduction is one of various possible interventions to ensure that 9.7 billion people are fed in an environmentally sustainable way by 2050. By improving resource use efficiency, food loss and waste reduction can help boost food supplies without aggravating the damage inflicted on the environment. This approach can contribute to the achievement of food security, improved nutrition and environmental sustainability.

In September 2015, the 193 Member States of the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The third target under SDG 12 called to halve per capita global food waste at both retail and consumer levels and to reduce food losses along production and supply chains (including postharvest losses) by 2030.

As a custodian agency of SDG 12.3, FAO spearheads the fight against food loss and waste (FLW) and works with a broad spectrum of stakeholders and partners to address the problem. With the aim of improving overall impacts through joint planning and implementation and efficient use of resources, FAO in partnership with Messe Düsseldorf launched in 2011 the Global Initiative on Food Loss and Waste Reduction – [SAVE FOOD](#) – to guide and facilitate collaboration among all parties involved in combating FLW. SAVE FOOD takes a multi-disciplinary holistic approach to ensure that FLW reduction is technically, economically, environmentally and socially acceptable, feasible and effective.

Food loss and waste reduction in Europe and Central Asia

Under the umbrella of SAVE FOOD Initiative, FAO in Europe and Central Asia is implementing a comprehensive FLW reduction programme in the region.

The programme supports target countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia in the development and implementation of national strategies, action plans and regulatory frameworks to reduce FLW in line with countries’ priorities and existing relevant national strategies. The programme also aims to raise awareness about FLW at the regional level, mobilize various actors both public and private, and facilitate collaboration among them to step up action.

To this end, FAO’s Food Loss and Waste Reduction Programme focuses on the following areas of action:

1. Formulation of national strategies, action plans and regulatory frameworks for FLW prevention and reduction

Strategy development starts with a complex process of collection and thorough analysis of data and information. To this end, FAO examines priority food value chains and commodities to assess levels of FLW, identify hotspots, drivers, causes and impacts, and conduct an audit of legal and regulatory frameworks to reveal legislative gaps and areas for improvement in existing national legislation and policies related to FLW prevention and management.

National strategies for FLW prevention and reduction address food loss and waste occurring along the whole food value chain – from production to consumption – and support the shift to a circular food value chain. They prioritize the prevention of food loss and waste over rescue, recovery and recycling, in order to secure and optimize resources invested in food production.

2. Strengthening FLW measurement systems

Training national statistical offices and value chain actors in the use of existing tools for FLW measurement is a main focus of the programme, with a view to strengthening the capacity of countries to monitor FLW levels at different stages of food value chains.

3. Promotion and enhancement of food recovery and redistribution systems

After prevention at the source, recovery and redistribution of safe and nutritious food for direct human consumption is the preferred option for reducing FLW at the level of food businesses.

FAO has developed guidelines for food recovery and redistribution (food R&R) based on work carried out in the region (Europe and Central Asia). The document offers guiding principles and recommendations to policymakers regarding the implementation of regulatory and legal frameworks that facilitate food R&R activities – including food donations – in their countries.

Building on these guidelines, FAO helps legislators to create legal and policy environments conducive to food R&R, and supports food sector operators implementing food R&R systems and activities.

4. Knowledge management and capacity development

The programme also supports the development of guidelines on good practices for the prevention and reduction of FLW at different stages of the food value chain as well as the training of value chain actors to strengthen their knowledge and capacities in this area.

5. Raising awareness and behaviour change

Creating awareness and improving understanding of the causes and impacts of food loss and waste, as well as the benefits that reducing FLW brings in terms of improving food security and nutrition, environmental sustainability and natural resources use, is essential to driving behaviour change and encouraging individuals and communities to maintain such behaviours.

In this regard, FAO studies the social, economic and individual factors influencing and guiding the food-related choices of consumers, as well as their concerns and motivation, and identifies knowledge gaps that need to be addressed to shift behaviour.

Based on the collected data, FAO carries out media and public information campaigns to empower consumers across the region to act differently.

In addition, FAO focuses on the education of children to create a culture of change, and to ensure that efforts to address food waste and loss are sustained. In collaboration with the International Food Waste Coalition, a group of educational specialists and sociologists, FAO has developed a set of teaching manuals entitled “Do Good: Save Food!”, which are being used in primary and secondary schools in Albania, Croatia, Hungary, Lithuania, Portugal and Türkiye to promote food waste reduction at the household level.

While shifting mindsets and educating the public is fundamental to behavioural change, the support and engagement of other stakeholders, including ministries, municipalities, private sector actors, NGOs and charity organizations, is essential to create an enabling environment for such change.

6. Collaboration and partnership development

As with other complex, multifaceted problems, the fight against FLW calls for broad collaboration between the public and private sectors, civil society, academia and financial institutions – in order to better identify, understand and implement solutions. Partnership and collaboration are the most effective ways to meet the challenges posed by FLW.

FAO’s SAVE FOOD Community of Practice on Food Loss and Waste Reduction promotes and facilitates multi-disciplinary, solution-driven collaboration among public, private and civil society actors, enabling them to identify and create synergies and work together in an effective and coordinated manner.

Efforts must be undertaken at different levels – legal, policy, technical, education and communication – to create a favourable environment for actors along food value chains and consumers to make choices and take measures to prevent and reduce food loss and waste.

Conference objectives

The Regional Conference on Food Loss and Waste Reduction will address common barriers to progress towards FLW reduction, identify the necessary *enabling conditions* and examine the solutions to food loss and waste.

The conference will explore a broad spectrum of recent developments and challenges in the field of food loss and waste in the region and provide opportunities for interactive exchanges of experience and the implementation of potential solutions by actors, wither working alone or in coordination.

From a wider perspective, the conference will provide the participants with a platform to:

- have open discussions with counterparts
- share experiences and learn from others
- stretch their thinking and push innovation further
- raise their level of ambition by understanding more clearly the possibilities, the opportunities and what others are doing
- network with peers and establish new partnerships.

Theme

The Conference programme (*see Annex I*) will focus on identifying the **essential elements of an enabling environment and the associated tools**, including legislative and business innovations, FLW reduction strategies and practical interventions **that support the transition to sustainable food value chains**. Specifically, the sessions will cover the following topics¹:

Session 1

Offers a comprehensive review of legal and policy framework that supports the improvement of food loss and waste management by creating conducive environment for relevant stakeholders to act, including revising legislation and policies covering agricultural development, waste management, regulation of food donation and food redistribution, food and feed safety and quality, fiscal incentives, as well as the responsibilities of the various public and private institutions overseeing these areas.

Session 2

The speakers representing all segments in a food value chain will share their hands-on experience and practices and solutions that proved successful in preventing and reducing food loss and waste. The speakers will comprise representatives of major food production, processing, marketing and packaging companies, as well as hospitality and food service sector.

Session 3

The presented cases will highlight the challenges pertaining to food loss and waste reduction and hindering the effectiveness of measures. Policy and legal changes, agricultural and marketing standards, rules on date marking, and food security will be the points at issue.

Session 4

Many businesses are already piloting innovative solutions to reduce food waste in their business operations, while having a positive impact upstream and downstream food value chain. At this session, the audience will learn about new technologies and approaches to drive the change, including the adoption of new business models, AI for smart labelling, dynamic pricing, product traceability, and intelligent food sharing and redistribution instruments among other solutions.

Session 5

Explores the concept of behavioural science and its potential application in addressing the problem of food waste at the household level. The speakers will also share examples of interventions based on regulation, information instruments and nudging approaches to help national and regional policy makers, as well as marketing specialists, in designing and improving appropriate interventions against food waste.

¹ Please see Annex I for the detailed agenda.

Audience

The conference seeks to bring together FAO partners and stakeholders active or interested in food loss and waste reduction in the region. The participants will consist of representatives of food businesses, government authorities, municipalities, research institutions and innovators, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from Europe and Central Asia.

The target participants can be divided into different groups:

- 1. Public authorities and international organizations**
- 2. Food value chain actors, professional associations and unions, investors**
- 3. Academia, research institutions and NGOs**

Provision will be made for up to 200 participants to attend the conference physically, including delegates, invited speakers and colleagues from FAO-REU, Subregional Office for Central Asia and Regional Representative Offices.

In addition, participants will have an opportunity to join the conference and participate in the discussions virtually.

Place, format, date, duration and outcomes

The Conference will be organized on 5–6 October 2022 in Istanbul, Türkiye, as a hybrid event, allowing for both physical and online participation.

Relevant COVID-19 restrictions will be taken into account and measures will be adopted accordingly.

The Conference will last for two days and cover a broad range of topics allowing participants to hold live discussions and exchanges.

In advance of the conference, the participants will be asked to share cases and examples of interventions that proved efficient in addressing the various aspects of FLW at different levels, sectors and stages of food value chains. The collected evidence will inform FAO's public database of good practices for food loss and waste reduction.²

In addition, the Conference organizers encourage participants to submit their questions, raise issues encountered during FLW reduction, and share views on existing obstacles and challenges. These will be addressed during Q&A sessions and the discussion panels.

A special concluding session will be dedicated to exchanging plans and perspectives of countries and interest groups represented by the participants, in order to inspire decisive action.

The Conference is jointly organized by FAO, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Türkiye, and the Economic Cooperation Organization Regional Coordination Centre for Food Security (ECO-RCCFS), with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of The Netherlands, under the FAO-Türkiye Partnership Programme on Food and Agriculture (FTPP-II) funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Türkiye.

² Creation of the database is in progress.

ANNEX I

PROGRAMME

DAY 1

8:30 – 9:00	Registration of participants
9:00 – 9:40	<p>Welcome and opening remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First key address – ECO Secretariat • Second key address – FAO • Third key address – MoAF <p>Introduction, overview of the agenda and theme of the day</p>
9:40 – 9:45	<p><i>Break to change speakers</i></p> <p><i>Ministers of Agriculture of SEC and ECO RCC countries and other high-level participants leave the main conference room</i></p>
9:45 – 11:15	<p>SESSION 1: CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT – POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK, NATIONAL STRATEGY, AND INVESTMENT</p> <p><i>Topics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal and policy framework (including legislation and policies covering agriculture in general, food supply chains, waste management, food donations, food and feed safety and quality, food redistribution and fiscal incentives, as well as the responsibilities of various public and private institutions overseeing these domains. • National strategies • Investment <p><i>Speakers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) - Luciana Delgado, Senior Research Analyst • FAO - Margret Vidar, Legal Officer • DG SANTE - Anne-Laure Gassin, Team Leader, EU Platform on Food Loss and Waste, Farm to Fork Strategy • Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of the Netherlands - Maarten Wegen, Agricultural Counsellor for Türkiye • Wageningen Food & Biobased Research - Sanne Stroosnijder, Program manager Food Loss & Waste Prevention • Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Türkiye - Zeynep Özkan, Head of Department of European Union Harmonization, Gıda Korumaya Kampanyası Koordinatörü • Rabobank - Lieke Verhofstad, Business development, Global Food & Agri Networks
11:15 – 11:30	Q&A

11:30 – 11:45	Coffee break
11:45 – 13:15	<p>SESSION 2: ACTION – FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN PROCESSES AND CAPACITY</p> <p><i>Topics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure • Knowledge and capacity development • Use of appropriate practices and technologies (including production planning, supply/demand forecasting, trading issues, cold storage and transportation) • Business and marketing strategies • Packaging solutions <p><i>Speakers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copa-Cogeca – Bruno Menne, Policy Advisor • Danone • Carrefour • Sodexo - Nicholas Hamilton, Global Director Sustainable Impacts • Tetra Pak - Ferruh Gurtas, Public Affairs and Government Relations Director
13:15 – 13:30	Q&A
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch
14:30 – 16:00	<p>SESSION 3: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOOD LOSS AND WASTE REDUCTION</p> <p><i>Topics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and legal changes • Agricultural and marketing standards • Date marking • Food safety and legal liability for food donors • Food security <p><i>Speakers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO – Juba Maruashvili, Senior National Policy Advisor • UNECE - Marit Nilses, Economic Affairs Officer, Market Access Section, Economic Cooperation and Trade Division • EU Platform on FLW • Too Good To Go - Christophe Diercxsens, Global Public Affairs Director • FEBA - Angela Frigo, Secretary General • Economic Cooperation Organization Regional Coordination Centre for Food Security (ECO-RCCFS)
16:00 – 16:15	Q&A

16:15 – 16:30	<i>Break</i>
16:30 – 17:30	<p>DISCUSSION PANEL</p> <p><i>Topic for discussion:</i> Applicability and replication: transferring knowledge and good practices to other countries and contexts.</p> <p><i>Panel members:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of Parliament, Georgia • Danone • Carrefour • IFWC - Thomas Candéal, Sustainability Project Manager • FEBA - Angela Frigo, Secretary General
17:30 – 18:00	Closing remarks
19:00	<i>Cocktail reception</i>

DAY 2:

8:30 – 9:00	Registration of participants
9:00 – 9:30	Food Loss and Waste Reduction Programme of FAO
9:30 – 11:00	<p>SESSION 4: TECHNOLOGY, SCIENCE, AND INNOVATION</p> <p><i>Topics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New business models (circular economy, access to new markets and channels, etc.) • Science and technology for reducing food loss and waste <p><i>Speakers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBM • Google • Ocado • Wageningen Food & Biobased Research - Sanne Stroosnijder, Program manager Food Loss & Waste Prevention • Glovo - Sébastien Pellion, Global Head of Impact & Sustainability • WholeSurplus - Olcay Silahli, Co-Founder & CEO • Rabobank FoodBytes!
11:00 – 11:15	Q&A
11:15 – 11:45	<p>INNOVATION DEMO SESSION</p> <p>A platform will be provided to present innovative ideas (at pilot or early stages of the lifecycle) aimed at preventing and reducing food loss and waste.</p> <p>The cases/ideas will be presented online.</p>

11:45 – 12:00	Coffee break
12:00 – 13:00	<p>SESSION 5: PEOPLE (PART I)</p> <p><i>Topics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measurement of household food waste • Nudging/changing the consumer choice architecture • Applying behavioural science to solve social issues <p><i>Speakers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WUR - Erica van Herpen, Associate Professor in the Marketing and Consumer Behavior Group • FAO - Cortney Price, Lead for Behavioural Science • Ogilvy Consulting - Jordan Buck, Senior Consultant, Behavioural Science Practice
13:00 – 13:15	Q&A
13:15 – 14:15	Lunch
14:15 – 15:15	<p>SESSION 5: PEOPLE (PART II)</p> <p><i>Topics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transforming social norms • Information and awareness-raising <p><i>Speakers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WRI - Sophie Attwood, Senior Behavioural Scientist • United Against Food Waste Foundation - Toine Timmermans, Director • WRAP
15:15 – 15:30	Break
15:30 – 16:45	<p>DISCUSSION PANEL</p> <p><i>Panel:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European Food Information Council (EUFIC) - Sophie Hieke, Head of Consumer Science • FAO - Cortney Price, Lead for Behavioural Science • Too Good To Go - Christophe Diercxsens, Global Public Affairs Director • WRAP • EIT Food - Marie Ammann, Innovation Manager • Rabobank FoodBytes
16:45 – 17:15	WAY FORWARD: Plans and perspectives
17:15 – 18:00	Q&A, conference conclusions and closing remarks