

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, either 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.**

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.
2. **Public authorities and international organizations**
3. **Food value chain actors, professional associations and unions, investors**
4. **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.¹

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 organized under the FAO-Türkiye Partnership Programme on Food and Agriculture (FTPP-II) funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Türkiye and is co-financed by the Ministry of Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of The Netherlands.

¹ Creation of the database is in progress.

ANNEX I

PROGRAMME

Master of Ceremony: TBC

Moderators:

Day 1: Toine Timmermans, Programme Manager for Sustainable Food Chains, Wageningen University & Research

Day 2: Hazami Barmada, Social Innovator & Social Impact Strategist, Public Affairs Specialist

Speakers and panel: the list is being regularly updated.

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 DG • Third key address – MoAF Minister <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> <p>Representatives of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), FAO, the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of the Netherlands, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food of Spain, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Türkiye, Rabobank</p>
11:15 – 11:30	Q&A
11:30 – 11:45	<i>Coffee break</i>

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 • Food recovery and redistribution <p><i>Speakers:</i> Representatives of Copa Cogeca, Danone, Tesco, Sodexo, TetraPak and FEBA</p>
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 • Food safety and legal liability for food donors • Food security <p><i>Speakers:</i> Representatives of DG SANTE, FAO, UNECE, Economic Cooperation Organization Regional Coordination Centre for Food Security (ECO-RCCFS)</p>
16:00 – 16:15	Q&A
16:15 – 17:30	<p>DISCUSSION PANEL</p> <p><i>Panel:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Milan • Rabobank • IFWC • TBC
17:30 – 18:00	Closing remarks
19:00	Cocktail reception

DAY 2:

8:30 – 9:00	Registration of participants
9:00 – 9:15	Opening remarks
9:15 – 10:45	<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> Representatives of IBM, Google, Ocado, Glovo, WholeSurplus</p>
10:45 – 11:00	Q&A
11:00 – 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	<i>Coffee break</i>
12:00 – 13:00	<p>SESSION 5: PEOPLE (PART I)</p> <p><i>Topics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy instruments to influence consumer food waste: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regulation ○ Economic instruments ○ Nudging/changing the consumer choice architecture <p><i>Speakers:</i> Representatives of FAO and WUR</p>
12:30 – 14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00 – 15:00	<p>SESSION 5: PEOPLE (PART II)</p> <p><i>Topics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and awareness-raising • Applying behavioural science to solve social issues • Transforming social norms <p><i>Speakers:</i> Representatives of Ogilvy Consulting, WRAP and WRI</p>

15:00 – 16:15	DISCUSSION PANEL <i>Panel:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The European Food Information Council (EUFIC)• Too Good To Go• WRAP• EIT Food• Impact Hub Istanbul• Rabobank (FoodBytes)
16:15 – 17:00	WAY FORWARD: Plans and perspectives
17:00 – 17:30	Q&A, conference conclusions and closing remarks