



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Food and feed safety, innovation
Food information and composition, food waste

SUMMARY REPORT

EU PLATFORM ON FOOD LOSSES AND FOOD WASTE: SUB-GROUP ON FOOD WASTE MEASUREMENT

DG HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY (SANTE)

3rd meeting

Brussels, 36 Rue Froissart (Albert Borschette building), Room AB-3A

28 February 2018 – From 10:00 to 16:00

Chair: Tim Gumbel, *Deputy Head of Unit, Food information and composition, food waste, DG SANTE*

Commission: **DG SANTE:** Bartosz Zambrzycki, Anne-Laure Gassin, Dora Szentpaly-Kleis, Manuela Marcolini; **DG ENV:** Silviya Aile; **JRC:** Carla Patinha Caldeira.

Member States represented (14):

BE, DE, DK, ES, FR, IT, IE, NL, RO, SE, SK, UK

Other public entities (1): FAO

Private sector organisations:

COPA, Europatat, FoodDrinkEurope, FoodServiceEurope, HOTREC Hospitality Europe; OSTFOLD RESEARCH, Nofima and Matvett Consortium; RISE RESEARCH INSTITUTES OF SWEDEN AB, WRAP, Zero Waste Scotland

1. WELCOME AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The Chair, Mr. Tim Gumbel, opened the meeting and welcomed participants. After the adoption of the agenda, he gave the floor to a colleague from DG ENV who had been involved in the negotiations on the revision of the Waste Framework Directive.

2. UPDATE ON THE STATE OF PLAY OF THE WASTE FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE – PRESENTATION BY THE COMMISSION

The Commission confirmed reaching a preliminary political agreement on a final version of the Directive on 23 February 2018 by COREPER and on 27 February by ENVI Committee and highlighted the timeline of future steps to be taken: after receiving the vote of the European Parliament (17 April 2018) and the Council (May 2018), the Directive would likely enter into force in June 2018.

The Chair emphasized that in the light of such a short timeline, discussions on the delegated act outlining a food waste monitoring methodology should commence as soon as possible, aiming to reach consensus by the summer, so that the act could be adopted by end March 2019.

3. FOOD WASTE RELATED PROVISIONS IN THE WASTE FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE – PRESENTATION BY THE COMMISSION

The Commission presented the provisions related to food waste from the amended Waste Framework Directive, referring to an agreed definition for food waste, Member States' obligations on food waste prevention including the reporting responsibility (the methodology, frequency, format of the reporting), targets, as well as the separate collection of bio-waste.

UK inquired about the possibility of a transitional approach in terms of Member States' reporting on food waste levels and the prospect of a rolling programme that would offer a certain degree of flexibility. The Chair emphasized that the question would be addressed at a later stage, while discussing the reporting methodology.

WRAP asked for further clarification on the reporting timeline. The Commission clarified that Member States should provide data for the year 2020, allowing some time for carrying out an impact assessment in view of setting up Union-wide food waste reduction targets to be met by 2030.

The Chair reiterated the objective of the meeting as being to collect members' views on the document outlining a food waste monitoring methodology, which will constitute a basis for discussing and drafting future legislation.

4. THIRD OUTLINE DOCUMENT ON MEASUREMENT: WHAT'S NEW – PRESENTATION BY THE COMMISSION

The presentation outlined the main developments of the document, focusing on adapting EU food waste monitoring to the new approach to monitor SDG 12.3; the scoping of the monitoring process; general requirements related to separate monitoring for each stage of the food supply chain; cost-effectiveness of reporting as well as future steps to be taken.

The Chair added that the Commission aimed to work within the parameters set by the Council and the European Parliament, building upon previous experience and taking into account the need to find a good balance between cost and efficiency of the future reporting methodology.

Several members inquired about the flexibility of the reporting process in terms of frequency of compositional analyses (UK) and sectors chosen (WRAP, Zero Waste Scotland). Aware of the high costs of waste compositional analysis, the Commission pleaded for finding a viable compromise on the frequency of this process. WRAP called for establishing some criteria on how to carry out such analyses, while UK asked for further clarification on the type of data collected and its source (*eg* industry studies). The Commission accepted a flexible approach on data collection, without ruling out voluntary reporting, provided that the data provided respects a certain quality standard.

IE offered to share the results of their national waste characterisation survey (focused on packaging) later on in 2018.

EuroCommerce pointed out that the value of food wasted would be a better measurement unit for the retail and wholesale sectors, as quantifying waste by weight would imply relying on data received from waste collectors. The Commission explained that using value as an indicator would raise questions about the comparability of data across sectors. However, the possibility of using value as a supportive tool in food waste monitoring was not ruled out.

As regards quantifying food waste going to the sewer, members highlighted the difficulties of monitoring such waste in households (IE) and industry (Zero Waste Scotland). The latter offered to share their experience with quantifying food waste going to the sewer from manufacturing, calling on the Commission to facilitate the collection and development of best practices on this type of monitoring. Acknowledging the challenges of the process, the Commission expressed hope to find a compromise on a technical level rather than dismiss monitoring sewer food waste altogether – thus leaving space for possible circumvention of the rules.

OSTFOLD RESEARCH, Nofima and Matvett Consortium and RISE RESEARCH INSTITUTES OF SWEDEN AB pointed out that the scope of the food waste provisions under the Waste Framework Directive was reduced in comparison to that of SDG 12.3, highlighting that Member States should be given the chance to report on food losses and food waste levels on a voluntary basis. Furthermore, OSTFOLD RESEARCH, Nofima and Matvett Consortium emphasized the gap created by excluding the quantification of food surplus going to animal feed and by-products. Quantification of this surplus may help better identify options for food policy.

FAO pointed out the conceptual simplification in the formulation and monitoring SDG 12.3, whose approach is to assign food losses to primary production and the early stages of the food supply chain and food waste to the demand stages of the food supply chain, whereas the Commission's food waste measurement covers all food chains stages. Further on, FAO inquired whether there was scope for the measurement methodology to accommodate reporting on food losses from Member States who wish to do it on a voluntary basis. The Commission explained that food losses were not defined under the EU legislation thus could not be covered under the current waste instrument. Nevertheless data collected via EU reporting may be helpful for modelling of food losses for Food Loss Indicators. Member States were invited to join the reporting exercise to improve available data, helping the Commission discuss and establish future targets according to the needs observed.

WRAP called for more clarity in defining the scope of the 50% reduction element of SDG 12.3 (type of food covered (i.e. wasted food/edible parts only vs wasted food/edible parts and associated inedible parts), stages of the food supply chain (i.e. inclusion of hospitality and food service under 'retail and consumer) etc.), while UK highlighted that the focus should be placed on edible parts of foods – an approach consistent with Champions 12.3 recommendations.

Several members (IE, UK) have requested clarifications in regard to the institutional framework and future steps to be taken. The Commission explained that the sub-group's input will help to shape a draft legal act on the food waste measurement methodology, which would then serve as a basis for

discussion within a Member States' Expert Group meeting on 16 March. The final version of the delegated act be then adopted by the European Commission and forwarded to the European Parliament and the Council in accordance with existing inter-institutional law and practice. In parallel with this process, the Commission will work on an implementing act laying out the reporting format, which will be later on presented to a Waste Committee which will vote over it. The Commission urged participants to send their input as soon as possible, in order to be included in the document before the meeting of the Expert Group.

On the obligation of reporting (IE), the Commission confirmed that the new Waste Framework Directive will bring a mandatory requirement for Member States to provide data on food waste. Member States will be able to choose the instruments to gather the data, while meeting some minimum requirements to ensure data comparability across countries. OSTFOLD RESEARCH, Nofima and Matvett Consortium expressed their support for establishing such minimum requirements, while calling for more clarity on the type of actions to be prioritized (prevention) and creating opportunity for voluntary reporting. The Chair agreed there is scope for such initiatives.

5. SDG 12.3: MEASURING PROGRESS. DEVELOPMENTS ON FOOD WASTE INDICATOR – PRESENTATION BY FAO AND WRAP

The presentation offered an overview of the on-going work on the indicators for the two SDG 12.3 targets: the Food Loss Index (FLI) focusing on supply and the Food Waste Index (FWI) focusing on the demand end of the supply chain. The former (FLI) had been discussed during the meeting of the United Nations' Inter-Agency Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators in November 2017, while the latter (FWI) is still being developed.

Several members (IE, DE, WRAP, UK) requested flexibility in establishing a baseline year for reporting on achieving the 50% reduction target. FAO explained that the current baseline was 2005 and the proposal is to move it to 2015 (the year when SDGs were created), but that the establishment of a baseline will also depend on the indicators chosen. Data will be acknowledged for countries that have carried out their own studies outside the established baseline, although a common reporting year will be necessary for compiling regional and world aggregates.

In terms of data transferability, the Commission signalled the fact that there was a discrepancy between UN's division of the different stages of the food supply chain and FUSIONS' approach. WRAP explained that it was problematic to set a clear division between food losses and food waste at the level of handling and storage; however work was being carried out to minimise the overlaps. OSTFOLD RESEARCH, Nofima and Matvett Consortium suggested a framework simplification by setting the boundary for food losses before the food processing industry in order to facilitate the reporting process. WRAP further clarified that the segregation of data according to sectors will be done on a national level, rather than at companies' premises.

As for the frequency of monitoring and reporting, WRAP explained the minimum requirement would be a baseline, an intermediary point (2024/2025) and the year 2030. At the same time, countries were advised to carry out an in-depth analysis on food losses and food waste every 3-5 years for reasons related to cost.

6. MONITORING FOOD WASTE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY ACTION PLAN – PRESENTATION BY THE COMMISSION

In the absence of the responsible colleague from DG EUROSTAT, the Commission offered a brief overview of the presentation and encouraged members to submit their feedback or any questions they might have to its author.

The Commission informed members of its on-going collaboration with the Joint Research Centre (JRC) on developing a food waste measurement methodology. The JRC worked on analysing existent gaps in food waste data, reviewing scientific studies within Member States and checking the comparability of data across countries. Members present were then encouraged to share any relevant information they might have with the JRC.

7. THE FOOD LOSS AND WASTE ATLAS – PRESENTATION BY WRAP

WRAP provided an outline of its on-going project: an inventory of data on food losses and food waste.

8. FOOD LOSS AND WASTE STANDARD: USE IN MONITORING FOOD WASTE TO MEET EU REPORTING OBLIGATIONS – PRESENTATION BY WRAP

The presentation focused on the main features of the Food Loss and Waste Standard (FLWS) and the possibility of using it as a tool in national reporting on food waste levels.

IE inquired whether the FLWS could also accommodate the measurement of food waste going to the sewer. WRAP offered to share their experiences with designing diary templates to quantify this type of waste. OSTFOLD RESEARCH, Nofima and Matvett Consortium also offered to share their latest report on food waste levels in Norway and announced on-going work on food waste from the hospitality sector and developing guidelines for the primary production sector (focusing on food sorting and packing). IE mentioned a current initiative to quantify food waste using the FLWS, signed by 6 major retailers, which would provide important data in the future. The Chair encouraged all members to share their best practice and experience via the Digital Network.

UK emphasized focusing only on the 'edible' parts of food waste would add 6 percentage points to the food waste reduction in the UK from 2007 to 2015, therefore it is important to distinguish between 'edible' (wasted food) and inedible parts and focus any potential targets on the former. WRAP expressed its support for such a division, mentioning that it was in line with Champions 12.3 recommendations – but also pointing out the higher initial costs entailed by the approach.”

On the obligation of countries to report on UN's Sustainable Development Goals (IE), FAO replied that there is no obligation in place for countries to report on all targets, due to the large number of targets and indicators and their different relevance to each country's specific context. A global reporting framework is being established by the Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDGs', where countries report on indicators they commit to through the custodian agencies who would then submit the results, including regional and global aggregates, to the UN.

The Chair reminded participants of the main objective of the meeting: to inform the 3rd outline document on food waste measurement, which would serve as a basis for drafting the delegated act. Members were urged to send in their late contributions, as the document will be discussed during the Member States' Expert Group meeting on 16 March.

In closing the meeting, the Chair thanked all subgroup members for their input and encouraged them to make use of the Platform's online working tool in order to communicate on their work and initiatives.