



Funded by
the European Union

Circular Economy in the Agri-food Sector Project (2024 - 2027)

Event: EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste (18th meeting)

Organizer: European Commission, Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety

Venue: Hybrid (Brussels & online, via Interactio)

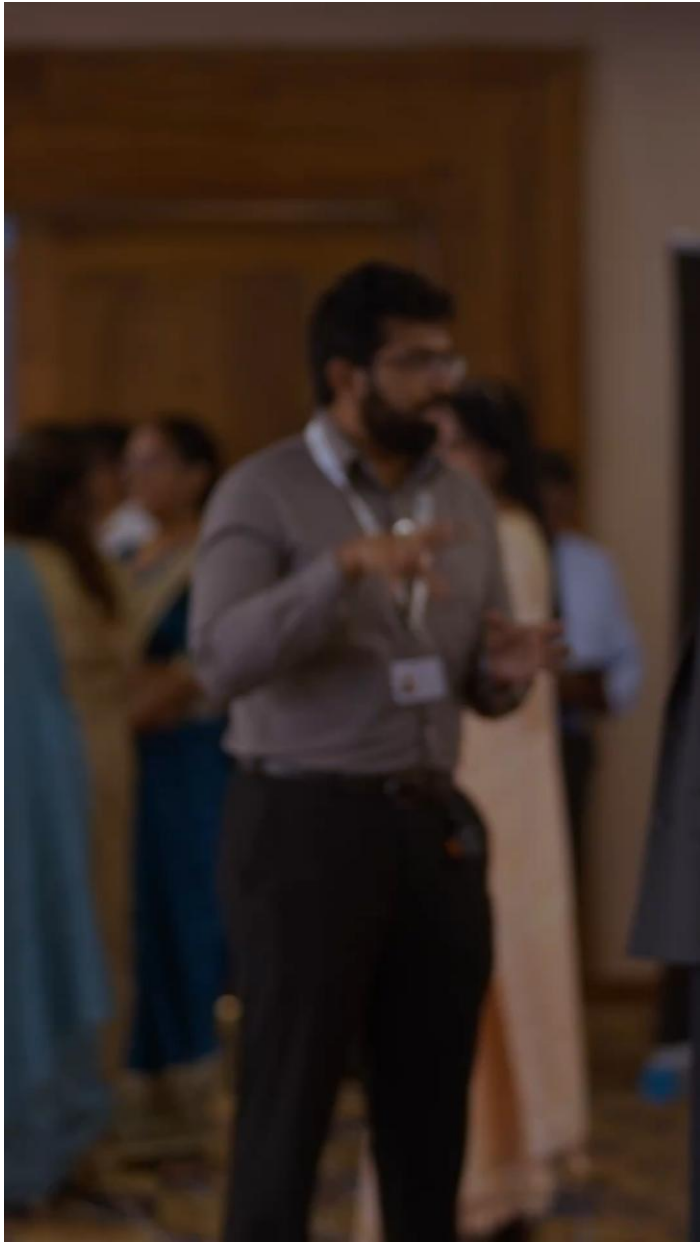
When: 27 November 2025, 10:30-17:30 CET

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Project Manager

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CIRCULAR launch, 4th March 2025



□ 120+ Participants from:

- Government
- Development Sector
- Private Sector
- Academia
- Change Makers

CIRCULAR (2024 – 2027)

Implemented by the Government of Sri Lanka
Global Gateway Strategy, the EU Delegation in Sri Lanka

- **Budget:** EUR 15 Mn EU + 1 Mn Germany (for GIZ)
- **Scope**
 - EF – Colombo & Galle
 - FAO – National and focused on Colombo, Galle & Nuwara Eliya
 - GIZ – Island-wide
- **CIRCULARITY in agri-food is**
 - Prevent and reduce food loss and waste
 - Utilize co-products and by-products
 - Go beyond food: support alternative packaging materials to plastics or Single Use Plastics

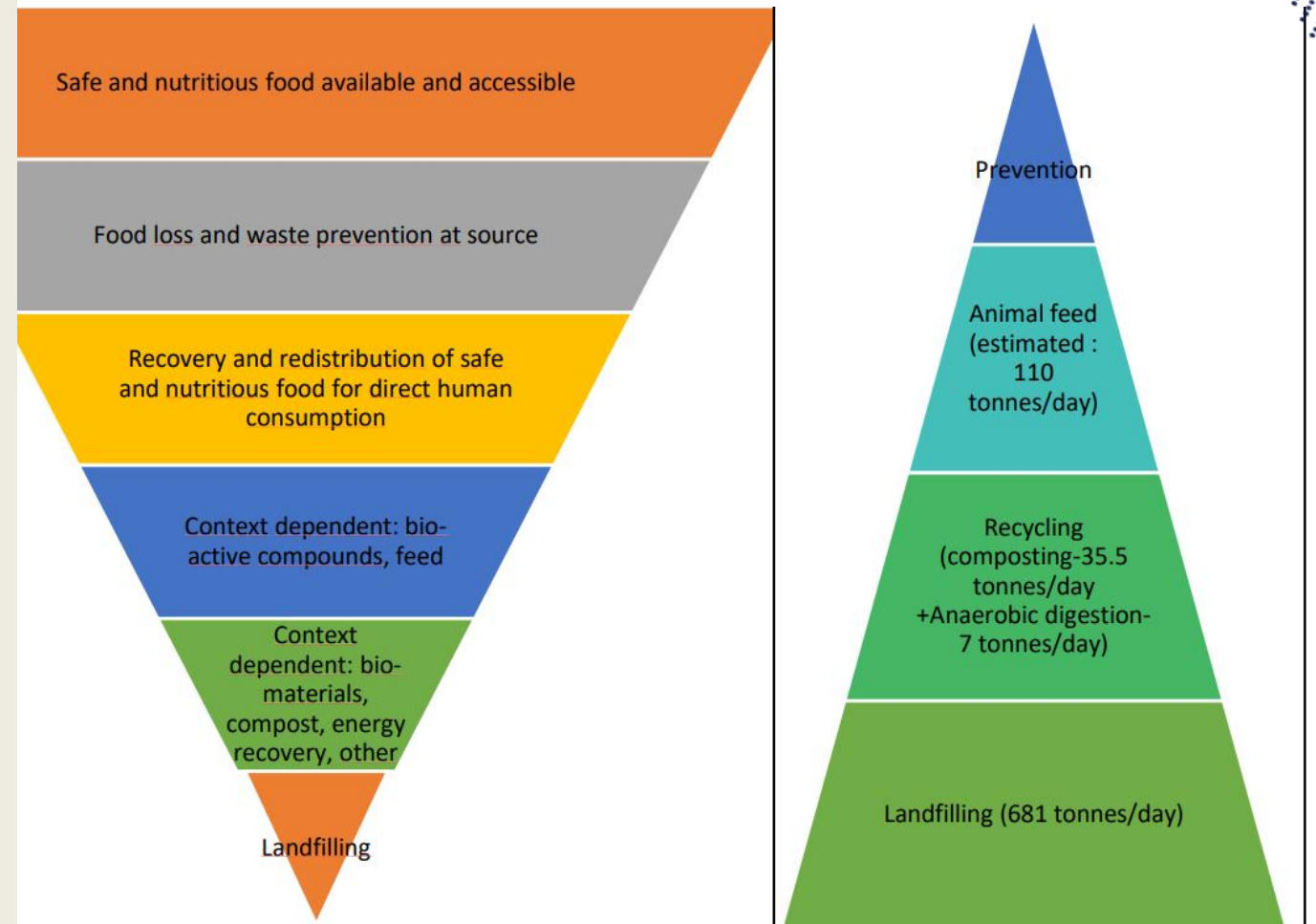
Regional Focus – FAO Asia Pacific

Asia-Pacific hosts over half the world's population.
A vital region for global food security and agricultural innovation.



Context: food losses and waste in Sri Lanka

- **Total amount of solid waste:** around 7,000 tonnes/day
 - **perishable organic material** around **66%** by weight
- **FW** in a Local Authority: 50-76% of the total solid waste
 - **estimated as 3,963 tonnes per day**
- **Post-harvest losses of fruits and vegetables** in Sri Lanka amount to Rs. 180 billion a year (Sri Lanka, Department of Agriculture, 2025)
- **Fisheries reach 40-60% quality loss**



Global plastic use in agriculture (2019) ~12.5 million tonnes annually

- Crop & livestock: 10 million tonnes
- Fisheries & aquaculture: 2.1 million tonnes
- Forestry: 0.2 million tonnes

Main issues

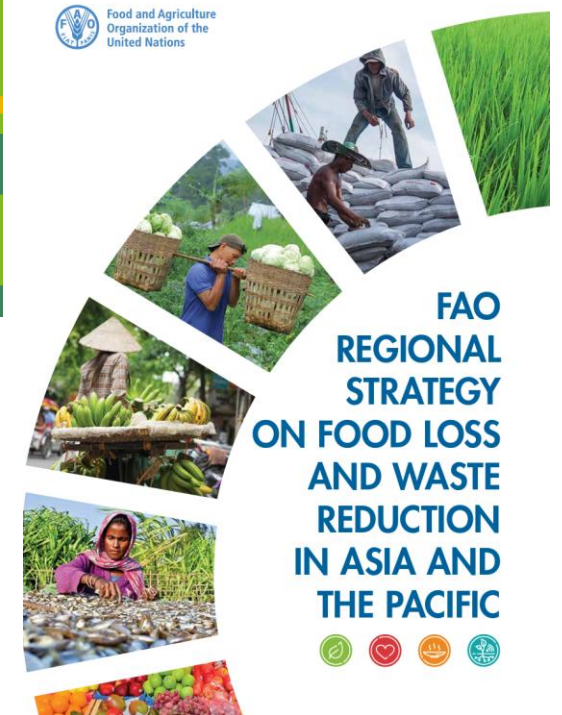
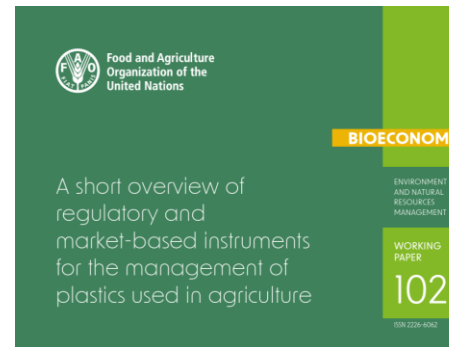
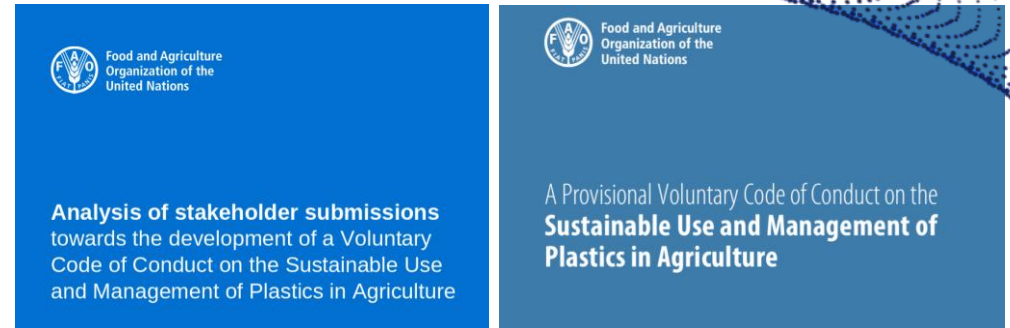
- High contamination hinders recycling
- Open burning persists in many areas
- Risks to soil, water, ecosystems, and food safety

FLW and packaging waste

- Food loss, food waste, and plastic packaging waste are interconnected.

Prioritize

- Integration strategies under circular economy
- Scaling up alternatives to single-use plastics
- Target support to SMEs



Source: *FAO Sustainable use and management of plastics in agriculture*
<https://www.fao.org/climate-change/areas-of-work/plastics-in-agriculture/en>

CIRCULAR ECONOMY in the food sector

(Output 1.1., 1.2., 2.1 partially)

Sri Lanka



Enable CE Business development

MSMEs transitions toward CE integration

MSMEs accelerator to scale up CE

Enable CE multi-actor investments

Contribute to the CE enabling environment

Empower Local Authorities policy (Action Plans) and B2B

Promote scalable good practices and solutions

Cross-sectoral collaborations Sri Lanka, region & EU

Education

Formal and informal education youth as change agents (3 e-learnings, ToTs)

Vocational education and CE financial literacy and technical training for food business operators

Key national policies

1. National Policy on Waste Management (2020)
2. The National Policy on Sustainable Consumption and Production for Sri Lanka (2019)
3. The National Roadmap on Urban Food Waste Prevention and Reduction (2021) and Action Plan
4. The National Action Plan on Plastic Waste Management (2021-2030)
5. Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) 3.0 (2026–2035)

Scalability and Next Steps

Technical areas	No. of scalable models
Recovery and redistribution for human consumption	9
Prevent and reduce food loss from producers to wholesale	33
Prevent and reduce food waste from retail and HoReCa	18
Food waste recovery for biogas and compost	30
<u>Alternatives</u> to plastics & Single-Use-Plastics (SUPs) from producers up to wholesale, from retail to households	3
Schools (project-based learning with the private sector)	30
Total	123

Beneficiaries: businesses, not-for-profit organizations, from production to HoReCa, schools

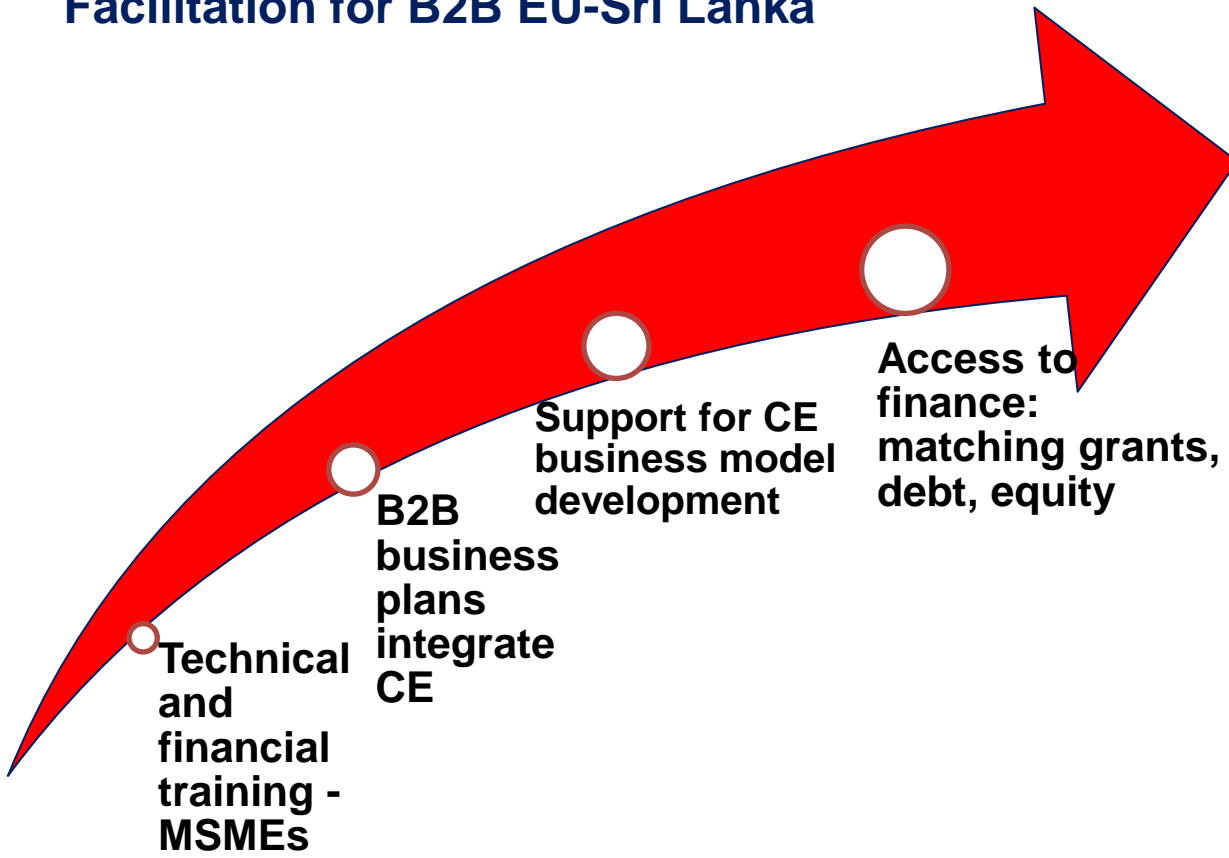
Next: Support 93 scalable business solutions to be investment-ready

Estimated budget: EUR 2mil from total assigned to FAO

What actions For what objectives

Included:

Facilitation for B2B EU-Sri Lanka



Scale up

Socio-economic and technological innovations to **prevent and reduce food loss & waste, and increase the availability of alternatives to plastic**



Circular Economy in the Food Sector (CIRCULAR)
2024 - 2027

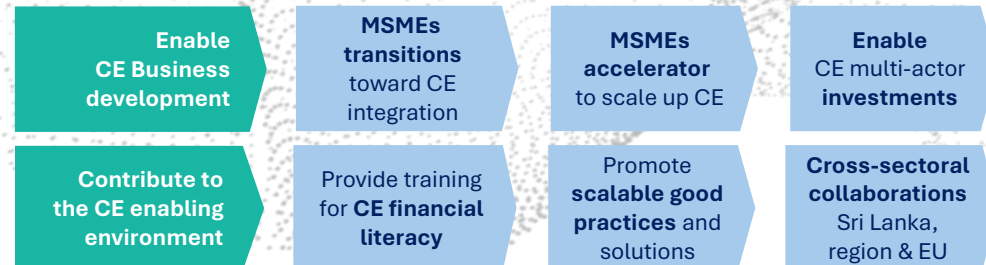
CO-CREATE AND SCALE CIRCULAR BUSINESSES

GET INVOLVED!



CIRCULAR welcomes **Expressions of Interest (Eols)** with at least one (M)SME based in Colombo, Galle, or Nuwara Eliya. **Sectors:** agriculture, fisheries, food processing, retail, hospitality, and plastics alternatives. **Topics:**

- **Reduce food loss**, from production to wholesale, and **food waste**, from retail to households, through improved practices and circular business models.
- **Recover and redistribute safe, nutritious surplus food** for direct human consumption in line with food-safety standards.
- **Develop and adopt alternatives to plastics and single-use plastics** across agri-food chains. Focus on reusable and compostable options.
- **Valorize former foodstuffs** into animal feed, bioactive compounds, or biomaterials following risk-based safety guidelines.
- **Separate unavoidable food waste** for conversion into value via **small-scale biogas and compost systems** supplying local energy and organic fertilizer.



We would like to know about you
Unlock Your Circular Potential

PLEASE FILL IN THE FORM

<https://forms.office.com/e/4RG2BB4KRS>



Circularity can be applied at different stages of the food value chain to keep the value of all resources, not just biological ones, in the economy for as long as possible before they reach the end of their life. Circularity focuses on reducing food losses and food waste by improving design and adding value, so that resources are used efficiently, including co-products and by-products. Circularity can be applied not only to food, but also to plastics and alternative packaging materials.

CONTACTS

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Circular Economy in the Food Sector (CIRCULAR) Project
Sri Lanka (2024 - 2027), Funded by the European Union
Implemented by Expertise France, FAO, and GIZ
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
UN Compound, 202, Bauddhaloka Mawatha, Colombo, Sri Lanka
<https://www.fao.org/europeanunion/projects/global-gateway/circular/en>

Thank you

Join us in Sri Lanka!

