



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Food sustainability, international relations
Farm to fork strategy

SUMMARY REPORT

EU PLATFORM ON FOOD LOSSES AND FOOD WASTE

SUB-GROUP ON ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

DG HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY (SANTE)

Microsoft Teams

24 June 2022 – From 11:00 to 15:30

Co-Chairs: Ms. Anne-Laure-Gassin, DG SANTE; Mr. Martin Reesink, Rabobank and Mr. David Rogers, WRAP

Commission: DGs GROW, JRC, RTD, SANTE

Member States represented (13): CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, IE, HU, IE, IT, LV, PT, SI, SK

Private sector organisations (21): BOROUME, CONSORZIO BESTACK, DUH - Deutsche Umwelthilfe e.V., ECSLA - European Cold Storage and Logistics Association, EFFPA - European Former Foodstuff Processors Association, EURO COOP - European Community of Consumer Co-operatives, FOODDRINKEUROPE, FUNDACIÓN AZTI – AZTI Foundation, HFBA - Hungarian Food Bank Association, HAROKOPIO UNIVERSITY, HOTREC - Hospitality Europe, MATVETT-NORSUS-NOFIMA CONSORTIUM, RABOBANK, SLOW FOOD, STOP WASTING FOOD MOVEMENT DENMARK, TOO GOOD TO GO, VENTURIS HORECA, WRAP - Waste and Resources Action Programme, WUR - Wageningen University & Research, WUWM - World Union of Wholesale Markets, ZERO WASTE SCOTLAND

Public entities (2): CoR, FAO

Observers: NO

Invited: ELIKA

1. Introduction

The DG SANTE Chair opened the meeting and introduced the two co-chairs of the sub-group in 2022: Rabobank and WRAP. She expressed the apologies of Richard Swannell who, due to unforeseen circumstances, was unable to attend today's meeting, and that WRAP would be represented by David Rogers.

The SANTE Chair recalled the overall aim and [mandate](#) of the Action and Implementation sub-group, in particular the objectives, the key topics to be discussed in this forum as well as possible deliverables for consideration by participants. The Chair presented the strategic approach proposed by the co-chairs for the sub-group in its first year focussed on supporting the EU's progress towards SDG Target 12.3 by identifying and implementing effective food waste prevention interventions. The group would discuss and share learning on policy options to encourage Action and Implementation. At its first meeting, the group would focus its discussions on the role of Voluntary Agreements (VA) in delivering change at scale, and how it fits with Governments, Regulators, NGOs and the Finance sector. The 2nd meeting of the sub-group would be dedicated to the role of food waste prevention in supporting climate action in context of COP27. Following presentation of the new EU food waste baseline at the plenary meeting of the Platform on 20 October 2022, the sub-group would carry out a deep dive into the implications of the food waste levels and implementation needed to deliver the future legislative proposal on EU-level targets as well as SDG Target 12.3.

FOODDRINKEUROPE inquired about the modelling exercise for EU-level food waste reduction targets, to be carried out by the JRC, and whether outcomes would be shared with the Platform. SANTE explained that the purpose of the modelling exercise is to support the development of the impact assessment with data collected both on the cost and efficiency of food waste prevention actions. JRC will assess the effects of food waste prevention on the whole ecosystem, including what would be the results for specific actors (e.g. primary production, manufacturers, households etc). The modelling exercise will be an integral part of the impact assessment published by the Commission along with the future legislative proposal.

The meeting agenda was adopted by participants.

2. Delivering change at scale through voluntary agreements to prevent/reduce food loss and waste

Speakers from WRAP, the Netherlands, Norway, Too Good To Go (TGTG), Hungary, Boroume (Greece) and Italy presented their experience with the implementation of voluntary agreements.

Discussion (key take-aways):

- Role of the policy environment and government

- WUR (NL) and Norway pointed out that a key success factor is to have the governments involved in design. The early stage is especially important as it changes the roles different actors could play. During the scope of implementation, the government is more on the

facilitation side. Hungary agreed with this point and emphasized the strength of community, bi- and multi-lateral partnerships and importance of pro-bono support that can replace funding.

- When Boroume started VAs in Greece, there was practically no policy framework. The imminent adoption of national legislation – in transposition of the revised EU Waste Framework Directive – was identified by Boroume as a key driver for stakeholders to join the VA. The Greek VA has elaborated proposals towards an incentive- rather than sanction-based policy framework and is in constant consultation with competent authorities (the Platform document “Redistribution of surplus food” has been very useful in drawing on examples from other Member States).
- Together with a certification body, Boroume developed a certification scheme on food waste prevention for all establishments covering all levels from how to prevent food waste at source, through redistribution. The scheme serves to educate employees, raise awareness and certifications are awarded to alliance members.

- Evidence base: diagnosis/data driving action (measurement and monitoring)

- In order to prevent abuse of VAs and greenwashing, it is important for partners to set clear targets and make it obligatory to report on food waste reduction.

- Credibility: transparency of data, reporting on results etc.

- Data transparency is key since data cannot lie and promoting real positive behaviour is equally important.

- Need for an independent governing body

- Facilitating transfer of knowledge, learning and experience: blueprint, knowledge communities, advice from experts etc.

- REFRESH programme initiatives were very useful to define [a blueprint](#) for the establishment of voluntary agreements.
- In order to support further establishment of VAs, there is a need to create more detailed discussion among EU MS who could share their respective experience and facilitate exchange of learning.
- The Commission proposed to support the production of a new deliverable of the Platform - a report with key learnings from members’ implementation of VAs, with an aim to make this available by the end of the year.

- Partnerships: multi-sectoral, across the food supply chain, public/private, and also within the government itself

- TGTG pointed out the need to involve a variety of stakeholders (NGOs, government, private sector etc.) and suggested considering a new model of agreement: “government to government”.

- Communications (internal/external) – to drive adoption, recruitment of partners etc.

- TGTG emphasised the importance of external communications. In the current market, there is plenty of food to be saved and, with the right communication, businesses aiming to utilise food surplus can achieve the right impact.

In conclusion, when asked about the key success factors for implementation of VAs, speakers referred to:

- Knowledge exchange: access to a blueprint/model for implementation and guidance/expertise of others is vital
- Identifying the right partners/individuals within organisations to ensure commitment
- Close cooperation between government and business
- Monitoring progress made (reporting and publication of food waste levels)
- Creating a climate of trust between all actors involved
- Integrating food waste prevention within broader educational programmes on food/nutrition
- Making voluntary agreements easy, appealing and “fashionable” could facilitate their adoption.

3. FOODRUS Cooperation and Collaboration Network (CCN) on food loss and waste

[ELIKA](#) (the Basque Foundation for Agrofood Safety) took the floor to present the FOODRUS project and Cooperation and Collaboration Network on food loss and waste (CCN).

JRC inquired whether FOODRUS had a sustainability plan in order to carry on with the activities once the project is finished. ELIKA explained that this is not clear yet as the project only started last year and, at this stage, can only foresee that the Basque Government could ensure its continuity in the region.

4. Conclusions and Wrap up

In concluding the meeting, the co-chairs noted the agreement of participants with the strategic approach proposed for the sub-group’s work and key areas of focus for upcoming meetings (2022/2023).

As regards voluntary agreements:

- a report would be developed with the support of the Platform to document results and key learnings from VAs adopted to date, including case studies,
- A&I sub-group will further reflect on methods and tools to facilitate ongoing learning from each other, including use of the Teams environment,
- focus on food sustainability (Farm to Fork Strategy) could facilitate integration of food loss and waste prevention across different policy areas and government departments (e.g. agriculture, climate, environment, statistics...), including access to funding (e.g. climate action).

In closing, the co-chairs (WRAP, Rabobank) recalled the important role of Voluntary Agreements in bringing together actors from public and private sectors, each bringing different perspectives and experience, to work together towards a shared goal. VAs provide a platform for constructive dialogue and collaboration where key players can learn from each other and improve.

As regards immediate next steps, SANTE advised that all presentations would be published on the [Food waste website](#) and encouraged members to publish information on their food waste prevention activities on the [EU Food Loss and Waste Prevention Hub](#).

Moreover, a reminder would be sent over the summer to all Member States requesting an update of the [national policy pages](#) found on the Hub in advance of the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste. Based on this updated information, the Commission will develop a first draft of the report on VAs carried out to date across the EU and beyond.