



Preventing waste in Europe – *Progress and challenges, with a focus on food waste*

Sanna Due / EU Platform on Food Loss and Waste, 11 June 2025

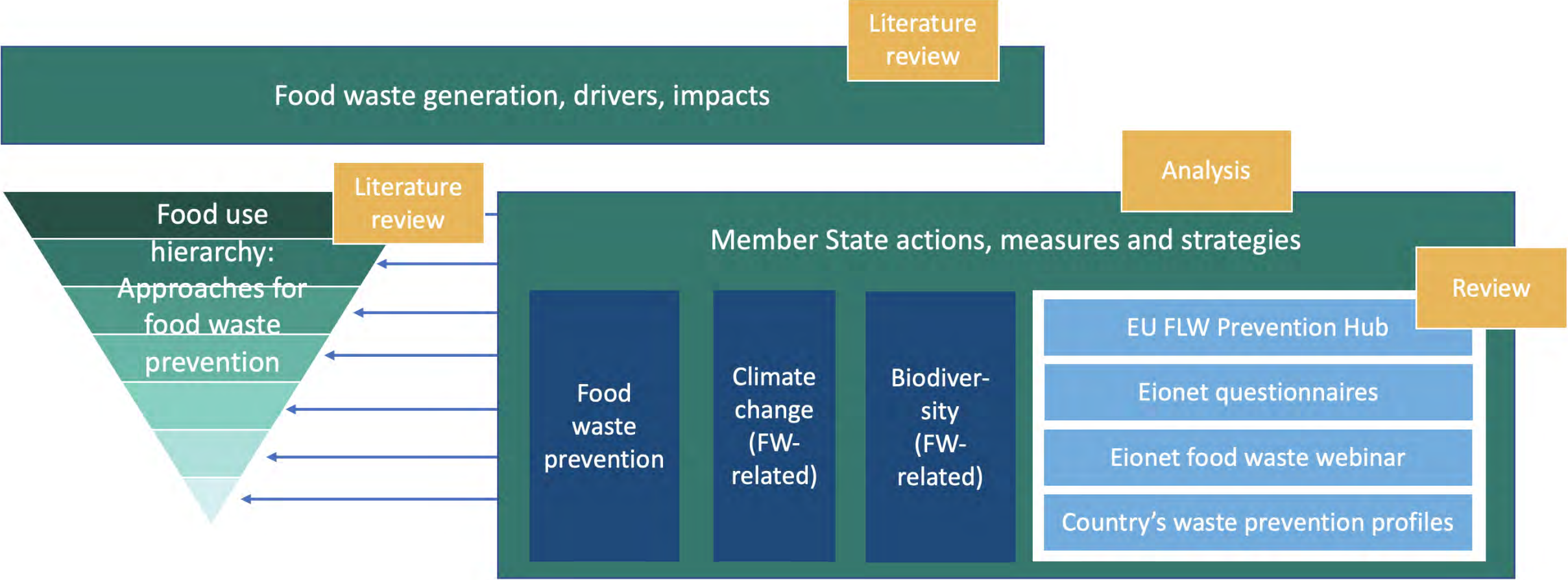
Three parts of the report

- › Progress in waste prevention at the EU level (all waste)
- › Food waste
 - › Assessments of ambitions to prevent food waste in the EU-27
 - › Overview of food waste monitoring efforts in the EU-27
 - › Insights on improving the food waste data reporting process to better evaluate future progress towards a food waste reduction target
- › **Country profiles** on waste prevention



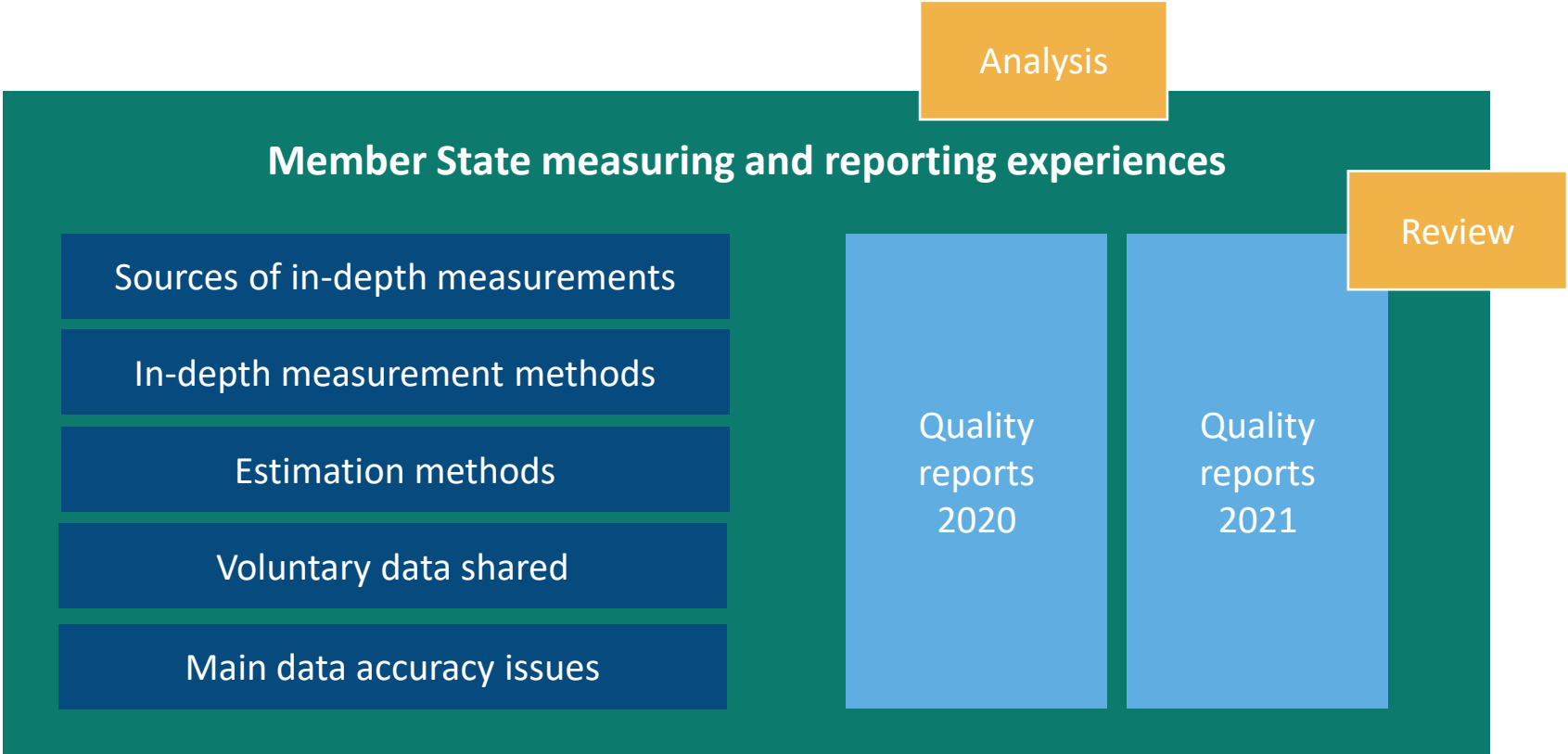
Ambitions towards food waste prevention in the EU-27 Member States

- Methodology used by the European Topic Center for Circular Economy and Resource Use



Insights into measuring and reporting by the EU-27+1 Member States

- Methodology used by the European Topic Center for Circular Economy and Resource Use (activity in the year 2024)



Key findings



Positive Policy Momentum Across the EU

All MS have taken action to prevent food waste – **92 %** of actions aimed at the highest level of the food use hierarchy.

15 Member States have adopted dedicated food waste prevention strategies and set national targets, showing strong commitment to SDG 12.3 and going beyond legal requirements.

Climate, Biodiversity & Food Waste – Tightly Linked Challenges

Reducing food waste helps cut greenhouse gas emissions and relieve pressure on ecosystems, yet food waste prevention remains weakly integrated into climate and biodiversity strategies.

Better Data, Smarter Action

Improved data from mandatory EU reporting supports evidence-based prevention policies; aligning measurement methods and sharing practices through EU platform on Food Loss and Waste and Eionet could accelerate progress



Countries prefer “soft” policy measures for food waste prevention



Waste prevention measures in the WPPs are largely based on soft policy instruments, with **62%** focusing on informative and educational actions, **21%** on initiating or supporting specific research or projects, and **11%** on voluntary initiatives or agreements..



Despite the link between waste generation and economic growth, **market-based instruments remain underused**, accounting for only **4%** of total policy instruments, alongside regulatory interventions at **1%**.



A balanced mix of policy measures, including market-based instruments (taxes, subsidies) and regulation, needed for effective waste prevention.



Strengthening evaluation essential to assess effectiveness of measures



EU MS are required to **evaluate their Waste Prevention Programmes every six years**, yet this process is often inconsistent or lacks transparency, making it **challenging to assess the effectiveness of these policies**



Additionally, there is **limited information** on the expected impacts of specific measures, the effectiveness of policy instruments, and the resources allocated at the national level.



→ More **transparent and consistent** evaluation of national waste prevention programmes is needed to inform policy development and to track progress



Findings on measuring – voluntary data

Share of total voluntary data



Edible vs. non-edible*

Number of countries that voluntarily shared respective data



Number of datasets shared by value chain stage



Data collected for the reference year 2020 via:

- Waste composition analysis
- Diaries
- Surveys
- Interviews
- On-site measurements
- Estimates from special questionnaires distributed to public waste collectors or business stakeholders



Food donation and redistribution for human consumption*



- Food banks: three countries obtained data from food banks, typically collected by national federations.
- Retails and wholesale: one country used additional data from a sector federation survey, covering two-thirds of the market.
- Not-for-profit social enterprise: one country relied on data from a social enterprise that redistributes surplus food to charities and community partners

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What is the Early Warning mechanism?



Mandate in the Waste Framework Directive, PPWR, Landfill Directive:

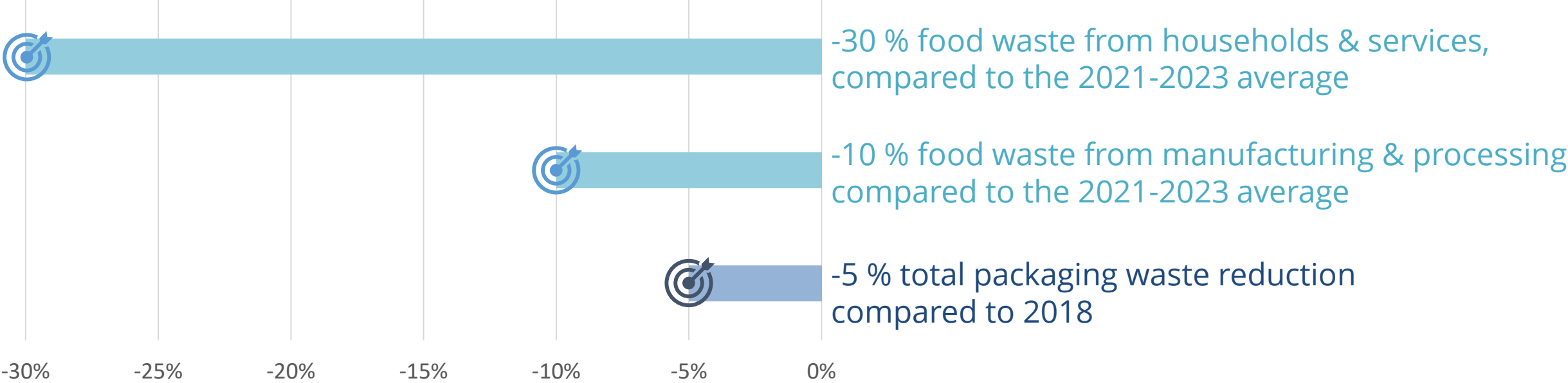
3 years ahead of the target years, the Commission in cooperation with European Environment Agency (EEA) shall

- assess EU member states' risk of not attaining the targets
- develop recommendations for remediation
- examples of best practices that could drive progress towards attaining the targets



Targets with early warning mechanism in the legislation

Target year 2030 - early warning report due in 2027



Member States can apply for a different base year

• Timeline

2025

Develop assessment methodologies

- Develop assessment methodologies
- **Eionet review of the methodologies**
- Revision of the methodologies
- Develop questionnaire to Eionet for collecting policy information
- Start sending questionnaires to Eionet (Q4)

2026

Develop draft early warning assessments

- Eionet provides information (Q1)
- Develop early warning assessments (Q2)
- **Eionet review of the draft assessments (Q3)**
- Revision of the draft assessments addressing comments (Q4)

2027

Finalise assessments and hand over to Commission/ESA

- Finalise revision of the early warning assessments, final data updates (Q1)
- Deliver final early warning assessments to Commission and EFTA Surveillance Authority (ESA) (March)
- **Share final versions with Eionet (March)**
- Commission and EFTA Surveillance Authority develop policy recommendations



Thank you for listening 😊



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European Environment Agency



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