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EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Food Safety, Sustainability, and Innovation

**Farm to fork strategy**

## SUMMARY REPORT

### EU PLATFORM ON FOOD LOSSES AND FOOD WASTE SUB-GROUP ON MONITORING

**DG HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY (SANTE)**

*Online via Webex*

*11 July 2024 (9.30-13.00 CET)*

**Co-Chairs:** Mr Bartosz Zambrzycki, DG SANTE and Prof Katia Lasaridi, Harokopio University of Athens (HUA)

**Commission and EU bodies (8):** DG SANTE, DG AGRI, DG ENV, DG INTPA, DG RTD, EEA, ESTAT, JRC

**Member States represented (11):** DK, DE, EE, ES, FR, HR, LU, HU, SI, SK, FI

**Private sector organisations (17):** AZTI Foundation, Confederazione Nazionale Coldiretti, ECSLA, EUROPATAT, European Dairy Association, European Food Banks Federation, FoodServiceEurope, Harokopio University of Athens, European association of Hotels and Restaurants (HOTREC), International Food Waste Coalition (IFWC), Last Minute Market – Impresa Sociale., REGAL Normandie, Research Institutes of Sweden (RISE), Thünen Institute, Venturis HoReCa: food waste management, Wageningen University & Research (WU), World Union of Wholesale Markets (WUWM)

**Other public organisations:** FAO

**Observers:** NO

**Other participants:** Landbrug & Fødevarer - Danish Agriculture and Food Council (DAFC)

## 1. Welcome and adoption of the agenda

The SANTE co-chair opened the meeting, introduced the co-chair from Harokopio University and presented the main points on the agenda.

## 2. *Update on supply chain segment self-reporting and insights on the climate footprint of Dutch food waste* - presentation by Wageningen University & Research

**Wageningen University (WUR)** updated members on their efforts to engage stakeholders in reducing food loss and waste. To promote self-reporting and KPI development, WUR created user-friendly, sector-specific monitoring templates and benchmarks. They highlighted challenges and opportunities in self-reporting, including defining the scope, sector-specific issues, and the need for expert support for companies. The use of templates and standardisation has led to a "snowball effect" of increased engagement and has allowed companies to showcase best practices, some of which have gained mainstream media attention.

WUR also presented their work in clearly informing policymakers and the business community of the link between food waste and climate change, providing quantitative and qualitative insights. WUR presented data on the Netherlands, showing food loss and waste's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and other climate impacts, emphasising the need to improve data collection and quality.

**Harokopio University of Athens (HUA)** asked for tips on initiating voluntary reporting and increasing member engagement. **WUR** advised securing buy-in from trade associations and finding business champions to attract more stakeholders.

In response to **COPA COGECA's** question regarding the translation of the templates, **WUR** confirmed that templates will be translated into English and highlighted the importance of ensuring translations maintain sector-specific vocabulary.

## 3. *Bringing in the behavioural perspective to food loss and waste analysis of value chains* - presentation by Food and Agriculture Organisation

**The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** presented studies that incorporate a behavioural perspective into food loss and waste analysis to understand why uptake and implementation of preventive solutions are often slow. To explore this, FAO funded a project analysing food loss and waste in the onion and potato value chains in Azerbaijan and Georgia using a behavioural science framework. This approach aimed to identify behaviours contributing to food loss and waste, barriers to change, and design interventions that promote behaviour change for reduced food loss and waste.

FAO used causal analysis to explore symptoms and causes of food loss and waste, and opportunities for behavioural change along the food value chains up to the retail stage. They identified several factors influencing food loss and waste: farmers' traditional ways of life, resistance to change, risk aversion, the influence of a past negative collective experience (e.g., with cooperatives in post-soviet countries), and lack of trust. Understanding these behaviours can help design more effective and sustainable interventions. FAO developed multiple scenarios and assessed their impact using the Ex-Ante Carbon-balance Tool (ExACT) for value chains, which estimates and tracks the outcomes of agricultural interventions on GHG emissions.

**SANTE** asked if the data used for ExACT modelling is publicly available. FAO confirmed that all data has been standardized and can be downloaded.

**HUA** inquired about gathering data at the farm level, given the challenges. **FAO** explained that they used local teams of consultants who visited farms and interviewed farmers, supplemented by farmers' self-assessments.

#### **4. *Food waste in contract catering in 2023. Exploring the implementation of a measurement standard: successes and challenges* – presentation by the International Food Waste Coalition**

**The International Food Waste Coalition (IFWC)** presented their standardised food waste reporting methodology, aligned with UNEP and EU standards, and customised for the food service sector. IFWC aims to have this methodology used by over 50% of their members (25,000 sites), achieve a 50% food waste reduction by 2025, produce a comprehensive report, and identify top-performing sites to set reduction goals.

IFWC shared that by 2023, the methodology covered nearly 4,000 sites in 16 countries, doubling from 2022 and representing 11% of IFWC's European sites. Food waste reduction has decreased by 15% between 2019 and 2022, though a 5% slowdown occurred between 2022 and 2023. IFWC plans to identify and replicate successful practices from "best in class" sites. Challenges include establishing a measurement baseline (as new sites are added annually), demonstrating economic benefits to entice new participants, along with limited resources.

In response to the **World Union of Wholesale Markets' (WUWM)** question on whether any sites include retail markets or wholesalers, **IFWC** clarified the project focuses solely on caterers.

**France** inquired about the most effective reservation/pre-ordering practices in contract catering (e.g. schools), to which **IFWC** responded they have no conclusions, however they observed that simple tools (such as communicating with parents in schools regarding attendance) are effective, without the need for penalties.

**SANTE** requested a future presentation comparing the IFWC reporting matrix with the one used in the United States.

**The Federation of German Food and Drink Industries (be)** confirmed similar food waste reduction numbers in food services in Germany.

**HUA** asked how IFWC engages catering companies voluntarily and whether the monitoring applies to small independent restaurants or only larger chains. **IFWC** responded that they communicate clearly on the value that benchmarking and best practices bring to the sites, noting their methodology aligns with EU and UNEP standards, minimising reporting burdens. They also stated that while most of their sites are larger chains, they welcome smaller players.

#### **5. *Monitoring of the German Pact Against Food Waste with wholesalers and retail* - presentation by Thünen Institute**

**The Thünen Institute** presented their project following the 2019 establishment of the German National Strategy for Food Waste Reduction. This included the Project Dialogue Forum on Wholesale and Retail Trade (2019-2022), which involved policymakers, scientists, and trade representatives developing a method for measuring food waste. This led to a 2023 voluntary agreement (pact) signed by 14 wholesale and retail representatives.

The Thünen Institute outlined the content of the pact, which includes reduction targets, obligatory measures (which includes the provision of data) and elective measures. The data provided by participating companies shall include the rate of unsold groceries and turnover per product, the share of unsold groceries donated for human consumption and animal feed. The first delivery of data was on 1st July 2024. The Thünen Institute evaluates the pact's implementation, acts as an independent control agency, and collects and analyses data from participating companies, summarising the results in an annual monitoring report, expected at the end of 2024.

**SANTE** asked if the Thünen Institute could compare their food waste data with waste statistics reported by companies. The **Institute** informed that they are not receiving additional data for such comparisons.

**Estonia** inquired about the Federal Ministry's role, to which the **Thünen Institute** responded that the Ministry meets with companies to discuss the pact's implementation, results, and development.

**HUA** asked if the pact's documents and templates are available in English. The Thünen Institute confirmed that the pact is available in English as an supplementary to a publication ([link](#)) and that the results will also be available in English.

## 6. *Food waste measurement in Greece: challenges and progress* - presentation by Harokopio University of Athens (HUA)

**HUA** presented their efforts to reduce food loss and waste in Greece. They highlighted their involvement in the EU-funded LIFE-IP CEI-Greece project, which aims to implement a circular economy in Greece. HUA provided statistics and discussed various projects, including a 2013-2014 household food waste measurement using a 14-day diary survey in 101 households. HUA addressed issues raised surrounding the methodology. The study will be run again next year, and they are conducting research into whether a waste compositional analysis would yield more reliable results.

Other projects focused on hotel food waste measurement (2019-2020), achieving significant food waste reductions using an AI tool, and on food waste in supermarkets, where HUA conducted external verification of food waste accounting and estimated food loss and waste levels generated by suppliers and customers.

In 2021, Greece transposed European Directives 2018/851 and 2018/852 into national law (law no 4819/2021), introducing measurement obligations, reduction targets, and an electronic FW registry. Fines will be imposed for non-compliance, but a moratorium allows time for adaptation. HUA also announced the *Retaste: Rethink Food Resources, and Waste 4th International Conference in Heraklion, Crete, on 25-27 September 2024*.

**France** asked why meat and fish are not highly wasted in Greece. **HUA** explained that vegetables are highly consumed thus most wasted, while cost influences meat and fish consumption and waste. **France** also queried the focus on 5-star hotels in the hotel food waste study. **HUA** responded that smaller hotels were reluctant to participate due to resource constraints. When asked about using a 300,000 euros annual turnover for catering companies instead of the number of meals prepared to measure food waste, HUA said the ministry chose this metric for ease of implementation.

**Germany** questioned the choice of March for the 2021 household food waste study. **HUA** explained that March was selected because it is not close to any major public holidays.

## **7. *Single Market Programme Call 2022 for national competent authorities - presentation by Hungary***

**Hungary** presented their national food waste prevention program, WASTELESS, funded under the Single Market Programme (SMP). Established in 2016, the program focuses on awareness raising, education, research, and provides data to the Ministry of Energy. Key projects under WASTELESS include a study on household and catering sector food waste, video guidelines for households, and guidelines for measuring food waste in retail, restaurant, and food services sectors.

The latest project, HORECA-FOODWASTE-RED, aims to reduce food waste in public and commercial catering. Initiatives include a food redistribution program, which saved 30,000 portions with a mobile chiller, 7,000 portions from canteens, and 5,000 meals through the MunCharity application in 2023. Awareness campaigns have been conducted in eight Hungarian schools, and best practice guidelines for food waste reduction and donation will be published in autumn 2024.

Another project, DATA\_PROCESS, supports food waste measurement in food processing and manufacturing. It aims to foster knowledge exchange, revise the reporting system, create sector-specific guidelines, and develop voluntary agreements. A future project, CATALYSIS, will focus on reducing food waste in public and commercial catering through kitchen staff and consumers using the Motivation-Opportunity-Ability framework for behavioural change.

Hungary emphasised the importance of EU funding and the SMP for all their food waste reduction projects.

In response to **HUA's** question on calculating food weight in restaurants, **Hungary** explained that scales are used to measure plates as they leave the kitchen as well as plate waste. **Estonia** asked how avoidable and potentially avoidable food waste is defined in household studies. **Hungary** responded that household surveys are manually reviewed to ensure accurate categorization and suggested watching [their guidance video](#) for more details.

## **8. AOB**

**SANTE** highlighted that the next meeting of the sub-group would take place in the second part of the year, with Germany as co-chair.

## **9. Conclusions and wrap-up**

**SANTE** closed the meeting thanking the co-chairs and presenters, for their participation and the valuable information provided.