SUMMARY REPORT

**EU PLATFORM ON FOOD LOSSES & FOOD WASTE (FLW)
SUB-GROUP ON FOOD LOSS AND WASTE MONITORING**

DG HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY (SANTE)

1st meeting via Teams

13 June 2022 – From 10:30 to 15:30

Co-chairs: Bartosz Zambrzycki, Policy Officer, Food Waste, Farm to Fork Strategy, DG SANTE and Tomasz Szuba, CEO, Venturis Horeca

Commission (4): DGs AGRI, JRC, ESTAT, SANTE

Member States represented (14): AT, CZ, DE, DK, EE, FI, FR, HR, IE, LT, PT, SE, SI, SK

Private sector organisations (26): CLEAN TECHNOLOGY CENTRE, COGECA - European Agri-cooperatives, CONSORZIO BESTACK, COPA - European Farmers, DUH - Deutsche Umwelthilfe e.V., ECSLA - European Cold Storage and Logistics Association, EUCOFEL - European Fruit and Vegetables Trade Association, EUROPATAT - European Potato Trade Association, EUPPA - European Potato Processors' Association, FEBA - European Food Banks Federation, FOODWIN - Food Waste Innovation Network, FOODDRINKEUROPE, FOODSERVICEEUROPE, FUNDACIÓN AZTI – AZTI Foundation, HAROKOPIO UNIVERSITY, HOTREC - Hospitality Europe, IFWC - International Food Waste Coalition, LAST MINUTE MARKET, MATVETT-NORSUS-NOFIMA CONSORTIUM, REGAL NORMANDIE, TOO GOOD TO GO, VENTURIS HORECA, WRAP - Waste and Resources Action Programme, WUWM - World Union of Wholesale Markets, WWF EPO - World Wide Fund for Nature European Policy Office, ZERO WASTE SCOTLAND

Public entities (2): FAO, UNEP

Observers: NO

Agencies: European Environment Agency

Invited: MERCABARNA, TRIVALOR Portugal.

1. Introduction

The DG SANTE co-chair opened the meeting by referring to the [mandate](#) of the Food loss and waste monitoring sub-group, in particular the objectives, the key topics to be discussed in this forum as well as possible deliverables. He then introduced Venturis Horeca, the co-chair of the sub-group in 2022, which announced the strategic focus of the sub-group in its first year: monitoring food waste in the food services and hospitality sector. The Venturis Horeca co-chair presented the agenda for the meeting that would be dedicated to discussing <u>challenges to monitoring food waste</u> in this sector and opened the panel discussion on this topic.

2. Challenges to monitoring food waste in the hospitality and food services sector: panel discussion

Speakers from Venturis Horeca, HOTREC, Trivalor Portugal (member of FoodServiceEurope) and the Norwegian Institute for Sustainability Research (Norsus) presented their experiences with monitoring food waste in the food services and hospitality sector, focussing on the issues encountered, costs, challenges, opportunities and link with national food waste reporting.

Below is an overview of **the main types of challenges (4)** highlighted by speakers as well as **benefits of overcoming them, enabling factors, key takeaways and examples of good practices**. The information is based on the presentations of speakers and the panel discussion.

#1 Operational challenges

- Planning issues due to lack of (reliable) data as to what and how much food is consumed, number of customers expected
- Lack of knowledge regarding what to measure (e.g. overproduction, food waste, production scraps, leftovers, etc.), when, how, by who – need to carefully plan a management system

  Good practice: a small 30-seats restaurant in Brussels collaborates with the start-up Recycloo, which collects and processes their organic waste (including measurement)

- Limited space in the kitchen makes it difficult to set up a monitoring system (e.g. bins, scale, visuals and instructions on the wall etc.)
- Adapting cooking, plating and display practices to avoid food waste (e.g. optimized plating techniques to avoid food scraps from being discarded)
- Frequency of monitoring to capture fluctuations in demand, customer patterns, seasonal foods (several times a day/ a year)
- Lack of time to measure food waste

  Key takeaways:
  Electronic tools do not guarantee quality data in and of themselves; the input and honest engagement of staff is crucial. Training staff to observe and measure food waste can lead to better planning and less food discarded in the bin, such as plate leftovers, food produced and served but not eaten, food produced but not served, rotten/expired raw materials etc.

Monitoring food waste levels is only half of the process – analysing the results and taking action based on this data is equally important.

Over time, it is important to balance regular measurement with better planning as these actions are interconnected.

#2 Costs

- Training of staff

- Monitoring tools (bins, scale, digital applications etc.)

Key takeaways:

Engagement with food waste monitoring could help with recruitment and retention of staff, as personnel feel they take part in addressing the issue.

#3 Resistance to change

- Establishments may fear food shortages if they stop over-producing and loss of client satisfaction (e.g. linked to a more limited menu)
- Establishments may be indifferent to the issue as long as the cost of surplus food is covered by consumers
- Offering food services is only a secondary activity for some operations – especially those non-commercial operators (e.g. hospitals, schools), so the motivation to reduce food waste is lower
- Lack of willingness to measure by staff, operational management, etc.

Good practices:

- voluntary agreements which include food waste reporting may motivate businesses to monitor, offering in return visibility and access to training and helpful materials. This works best with bigger companies, as engaging smaller companies is more difficult often due to a lack of resources.
- Managing consumer expectations: educating/informing consumers so they are aware of the reasons why the food offer is limited/ portions are smaller etc.

Enabling factor: there is demand for more sustainable consumption, which also drives decisions taken by establishments and chefs regarding sustainability of operations, while shaping consumer expectations.

#4 Data collection and analysis

- Availability and continuity of monitoring tools
- Different monitoring tools have different formats for data

- Reliability of data collected on food waste levels, as there is a tendency to underreport (e.g. 4-5 times less food waste reported by staff vs. external assessment)
- Extracting data related to food from overall waste generated by businesses which provide food services as secondary activities (e.g. hospitals, schools) – some establishments fall under multiple NACE codes
- Challenge of reaching a representative sample for the sector
- Need for comparable data across years, as new establishments report every year and measurement tools improve over time
- Scaling the data appropriately

  Proposed solution: choosing KPIs where reliable data is available (e.g. for the private sector it can be the turnover value, mass of food; for the public sector - number of guests)

- Receiving and handling sensitive and confidential information regarding businesses' operations

  Key takeaway:
  The type of establishment has a big impact on the food waste generated and the ability to prevent the edible fraction from being wasted (e.g. higher amounts of inedible waste in the case of seafood restaurants). As not all food waste can be prevented, this may require managing expectations concerning the achievement of 'zero waste'.

  Data from waste recycling facilities are different from the data obtained by monitoring food waste in kitchens; they may also include other waste streams such as paper towels, napkins etc. Monitoring food waste increases awareness of the issue and by using waste statistics to estimate the food waste share, this learning factor is lost (e.g. hotspots of food waste, reasons for food waste generation etc.).

3. Measuring and Reporting Food Waste in the Hospitality and Food Service Sectors – methodology and baseline, by Stephane Leroux, Executive Director International Food Waste Coalition (IFWC)

IFWC is a coalition dedicated to fighting food waste in the hospitality and food service sector, driving change through action-oriented projects, testing solutions on site (e.g. technological, communications etc.). IFWC carries out a food waste reporting initiative for its members, defining a common scope and methodology, a metric (gram/cover), setting reduction targets and engaging members in annual reporting. With over 780 reporting sites, results indicate a reduction in food waste by 20% on average since 2019. The report and database are available to all interested parties. In terms of next steps, IFWC plans to increase the number of reporting establishments in 2022, further assess the impact of the pandemic on food waste data and to continue feeding national/international databases.

EUPPA inquired about the exclusion of beverages from reporting, IFWC explained this was done for convenience reasons, in agreement with their members. The SANTE co-chair highlighted that EU reporting on beverages can be done by Member States on a voluntary basis.

Norsus asked about the manner in which IFWC deals with data comparability (due to growing number of reporting establishments, different profiles of operators and services offered etc.). IFWC explained that the first objective is to determine operators to measure their food waste; comparing the amounts of food waste across years is secondary. In terms of differences between business profiles (e.g. meal canteens vs. grab and go), it is difficult to compare the covers and separate reporting according to type of operations could be a solution.

Venturis Horeca inquired about how the measurement was carried out from an operational perspective and about the definition of 'cover'. IFWC explained that their members did the measurement themselves according to the common methodology, while onsite assistance was offered to companies that requested it. IFWC defined the 'cover' metric as 'one person paying a meal'. In reply to Venturis Horeca's question about the possibility to transform grams to tonnes and convert this into monetary value, IFWC replied positively.

HOTREC highlighted the small share of hospitality businesses taking part in the reporting exercise and the need to get away from a 'blame' culture targeting personnel in food business operations when it comes to food waste reduction. HOTREC explained that the hospitality sector and its staff understand the necessity to act and are committed to reducing food waste, thus a lack of ability/capacity to measure does not mean a lack of willingness to reduce food waste. IFWC explained that such establishments did not have data initially, but now more and more are monitoring their food waste levels.

Clean Technology Centre pointed out that in the context of similar studies with self-reporting on food waste levels, an under-reporting tendency was noticed and asked about ways to mitigate such behaviours. IFWC noted that the average food waste data reported by establishments were higher than the amounts measured onsite by IFWC, thus it was decided to exclude data that were too low or too high (30% of data).

The SANTE co-chair asked about the challenges encountered during this reporting exercise. IFWC indicated the lack of time and shortage of staff and resources to carry out food waste monitoring, while highlighting the role of technology and the need to explain the benefits of monitoring to establishments to convince them to participate.

4. Food waste monitoring: a challenge to involve as many catering sites as possible in Normandie, presentation by Nathalie Villermet, animator of Regal Normandie (French regional network to fight against food waste)

REGAL Normandie is a regional network established in 2014, working with other NGOs, public authorities and private operators to reduce food waste across the food supply chain. REGAL Normandie presented their project "Défi assiettes vides" aiming to reduce food waste in collective catering in Normandie. Establishments are challenged to monitor food waste and take reduction measures during a week, twice a year and report back on findings using simple tools. The reporting is done to the French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME) and focuses on edible waste from kitchen and plates. In terms of next steps, the project will also consider inedible waste and will expand to nursing homes, public administration and corporate establishments. The project will also be linked with the national 'Ma cantine' approach. In ending their presentation,

REGAL Normandie announced the launch of a new project to monitor food waste at all stages of the food supply chain in Normandy.

France inquired about the plans to expand the project "Défi assiettes vides" to other types of establishments. REGAL Normandie explained that hospital canteens will be reached through the regional health agency.

JRC inquired whether the project promotes other food waste interventions beyond monitoring. REGAL Normandie explained that participating establishments are offered training through a local organization as well as simple tools including actions that can be taken at production/ service/ education levels.

5. Food waste prevention practices implemented by wholesale markets: Mercabarna (Spain) and Rungis (France) case studies, presentation by Jordi Valls, Director General Mercabarna and Eugenia Carrara, Secretary General of the World Union of Wholesale Markets (WUWM)

WUWM presented two case studies of how Mercabarna and Rungis wholesale markets manage and prevent their food waste. 'Le potager de Marianne' is an initiative which collects surplus fruit and vegetables from the Rungis market and redistributes them to food aid associations. The market also integrates waste recovery measures within its operations, valorizing the market's waste as a source of energy; using organic waste in compost, methanisation and biogas and recycling the remaining fraction of waste. The 'Foodback' initiative of Mercabarna is a food recovery center which categorizes surplus fruit and vegetables according to their highest value use (for food redistribution, energy production etc.). The project aims to involve wholesale companies in the fight against food waste and ensures the traceability of redistributed surplus food. Apart from the 'Foodback' collection centre, Mercabarna's management system also includes a recycling centre and smart waste containers.

6. Conclusions and wrap up

The Venturis Horeca co-chair enumerated some of the challenges to measuring food waste by food services and hospitality, as discussed during the panel (e.g. the diversity of operations of the sector which does not allow a one size fits all approach, need to ensure client satisfaction and manage their expectations, the issue of under-reporting, data interpretation and reliability and follow-up actions etc.). In some cases, fear and indifference are barriers to measuring food waste, thus it is key to understand operators' readiness and willingness to act in this regard.

The SANTE co-chair highlighted the importance of translating individual food waste monitoring into national reporting; of harmonising definitions and approaches (e.g. edible, inedible, avoidable fraction etc.) and of scaling up data for the whole sector at national level.

The SANTE co-chair announced that the autumn sub-group meeting would focus on discussing **solutions** to the challenges identified in the first meeting. A Platform document will be prepared following the two sub-group meetings, comprising challenges and solutions to food waste monitoring in the food services and hospitality sector, including key learnings. The document will be shared with members for their input and validation.

In closing the meeting, members were reminded of the upcoming call for proposals for grants to help stakeholders measure and reduce food waste in their operations.