



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Food and feed safety, innovation
Food information and composition, food waste

SUMMARY REPORT

EU PLATFORM ON FOOD LOSSES & FOOD WASTE

DG HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY (SANTE)

2nd meeting

Brussels, 99-101 Rue Belliard (Jacques Delors building), JDE 52

14 June 2017 – From 9:30 to 18:00

Chair: Sabine Jülicher, *Director, Food and feed safety, Innovation, DG SANTE*

Commission: Commissioner Andriukaitis, Marco Valletta (CAB); **DG SANTE:** Alexandra Nikolakopoulou, Tim Gumbel, Anne-Laure Gassin, Bartosz Zambrzycki, Dora Szentpaly-Kleis, Athanasios Raikos, Manuela Marcolini, Cristina Lisetchi, Paolo Caricato, Nelly Le Devic; **DG AGRI:** Olivier Diana; **DG ENV:** Davide Messina; **DG GROW:** Blaga Popova, Annalisa La Rovere; **DG MARE:** Chiara Bacci; **DG TAXUD:** Pia Michelsen; **OIB:** Carole Micmacher, Lorenzo Buccellati; **REA:** Isabella Van Borm; **RTD:** Stefan De Vos, Andere Goirigolzarri, Claudia Pecoraro

Member States represented (26):

AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK

Private sector organisations:

AIBI: International Association of Plant Bakers AISBL; BEUC: The European Consumer Organisation; BOROUME – "We Can"; City of Milan: Secretariat of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact; COGECA: European Agri-Cooperatives; COPA: European Farmers; ECPA: European Crop Protection Association; ECSLA: European Cold Storage and Logistics Association; EFFPA: European Former Foodstuff Processors Association; EUCOFEL: European Fruit and Vegetables Trade Association; EUROCOMMERCE: the retail, wholesale and international trade representation to the EU; EURO COOP: European Community of Consumer Co-operatives; FEBA: European Federation of Food Banks; FEEDBACK GLOBAL; FEFAC: European Feed Manufacturers Federation; FOODCLOUD; FOODDRINKEUROPE; FOODSERVICEEUROPE; FoodWIN (Food Waste Innovation Network); FRESHFEL: European Fresh Produce Association; HCWH Europe: Health Care Without Harm; HFBA: Hungarian Food Bank Association; HOTREC: Hospitality Europe; IATA: International Air Transport Association; INDEPENDENT RETAIL EUROPE; LES RESTAURANTS DU COEUR; OSTFOLD RESEARCH, Nofima and Matvett Consortium; RISE RESEARCH INSTITUTES OF SWEDEN AB; SLOW FOOD; UEAPME: European Association of Craft, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises; WAGENINGEN UR: Wageningen University & Research; WRAP: Waste and Resource Action Programme; ZERO WASTE SCOTLAND

Public entities:

EESC - European Economic and Social Committee, COR – European Committee of the Regions; OECD - Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

Invited *ad hoc* experts:

Raquel Diaz Ruiz, CREDA-UPC-IRTA (Research Centre for Agri-Food Economy & Development)

Adeena Campas – ANIA (National Association of Food Industries, France)

Marie Castagné – French Federation of Food Banks

Kate Bygrave, WRAP

Observers:

EFTA: Norway; **Food SCP Roundtable:** European Food Sustainable Consumption and Production Round Table Secretariat

1. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME TO PARTICIPANTS

The Chair, Ms. Sabine Jülicher introduced herself and welcomed members to the second meeting of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste (FLW Platform). She thanked Commissioner Andriukaitis for his participation and also extended her thanks to the European Committee of the Regions and to the European Economic and Social Committee for hosting the Platform's meeting in the Jacques Delors building.

The Chair then outlined the agenda which had been designed to update the Platform both on the Commission's ongoing work in the field of food waste prevention as well as that of members. While the morning would focus on the Commission's progress on actions related to the Circular Economy Action Plan and the creation of a new sub-group of the FLW Platform on "action and implementation", the afternoon would be dedicated to sharing experience of actors in Member States with the implementation of both voluntary and regulatory initiatives to combat food waste.

After reminding members that the meeting was webstreamed and informing regarding the interpretation regime, the Chair adopted the agenda with no further comments and gave the floor sequentially to the speakers for their respective agenda items (Commissioner Andriukaitis, Alexandra Nikolakopoulou, Head of Unit DG SANTE, Anne-Laure Gassin, Bartosz Zambrzycki, Dora Szentpaly-Kleis, Policy Officers DG SANTE).

2. PRESENTATIONS

2.1 Commissioner Vytenis Andriukaitis – Health and Food Safety: EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste - Moving towards Sustainable Development Goal 12.3

Commissioner Andriukaitis called for a holistic approach in combating food waste citing recommendations put forward by recent reports of the European Court of Auditors and the European Parliament highlighting the need for policy coherence and integrated action at EU and national levels. He then updated the Platform on the Commission's progress in relation to the Circular Economy Action Plan, notably the development of a methodology to quantify food waste, the elaboration of EU guidelines on food donation and on the use of former foodstuffs as feed, as well as the ongoing research on date marking practices. He further mentioned the creation of two digital tools: one to facilitate cooperation between members of the Platform and the other to facilitate exchange of best practice in food waste prevention with all interested stakeholders.

He ended his speech with a call for action to all Platform members to maintain their efforts in tackling food waste, as well as to continue to engage with all key players in the food value chain. He referred to action and implementation as being at the core of the Platform's agenda and encouraged all participants to use this forum dedicated to food waste prevention in order to cooperate, share innovative solutions and design new business models for healthier and more sustainable food systems.

Following Commissioner Andriukaitis' presentation, the Chair opened up the floor for comments from members which centred on the following topics:

- the need to involve all members of society that can make a beneficial contribution to tackling food loss and waste as well as collaborating with other policy areas in order to prevent this phenomenon at all levels of the food value chain, including on the farm;
- the need to rebalance the role of different actors in the food chain and improve planning of food production so as to better manage supply and demand, thereby preventing food waste and protecting farmers' revenues;
- the need to support food banks and other charities in building capacity for food donation as well as efforts of other NGOs in implementing actions on the ground;
- the opportunity of integrating both healthy diet and food waste prevention messages in order to strengthen consumer impact and promote behavioural change.

In regard to these comments, Commissioner Andriukaitis stated that:

- One of the Platform's main objectives was to involve all actors of the food value chain, together with organisations, civil society and public authorities, in a common fight against food waste. He acknowledged the capacity issues to which food banks and other NGOs may be confronted and that public authorities at EU, national and local levels needed to look at the financial instruments available and develop new economic models (including incentives and taxation) in order to support food waste prevention and food redistribution efforts.
- There was a need to collaborate on an institutional level and create synergies between different policy areas. In this context, Commissioner Andriukaitis referred to the work of his own services in relation to diet and health as well as discussions with fellow

Commissioners Hogan and Navracsics on, respectively, the modernisation of the Common Agricultural Policy and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle on a school level.

- In terms of addressing specific issues related to the functioning of the food supply chain, Commissioner Andriukaitis expressed the Commission's readiness to organise debates and more detailed analysis of the issues at hand. He also expressed his willingness to reduce administrative burden and minimize food losses and food waste along the whole food supply chain.

2.2. Update on the Circular Economy Action Plan – EU food waste prevention initiatives, by Ms. Alexandra Nikolakopoulou, Head of Unit, Food information and composition, food waste (DG SANTE)

Ms. Nikolakopoulou provided an update on the Circular Economy Action Plan in relation to food waste prevention, highlighting the fact that the Commission's key deliverables were advancing as expected. She referred to activities and meetings of the FLW Platform and its specific sub-groups on food donation and food waste measurement, the creation of a new sub-group on "action and implementation" but also to the future launch of digital tools to support communication between members of the Platform and to reach a broader range of stakeholders active in the field of food waste prevention. The EU guidelines respectively on food donation and on the use of former foodstuffs as feed were both forecast for adoption by the end of the 2017 and findings from the date marking study would also be available by end of year.

When it came to the Commission's work on elaborating a food waste measurement methodology, Ms. Nikolakopoulou emphasized the fact that its content was dependent on the outcome of the trilogue discussions between the Council, the Commission and the European Parliament on the revision of the Waste Framework Directive. In this regard, she referenced some of Parliament's amendments to the Commission's legislative proposal (*e.g.* definition of food waste, setting an aspirational EU food waste reduction target and laying down a food waste hierarchy).

Ms. Nikolakopoulou then talked about the future Platform meetings and agenda forecast, for both sub-groups (to meet in the 4th quarter of the year) and plenary meeting (to take place on 7 November 2017). For the latter, she indicated a series of topics which could be addressed such as: funding opportunities for food waste prevention under the LIFE programme; date marking; an update on the implementation of the digital tools and progress on the review of criteria for Green Public Procurement (GPP) for food and catering services. In regard to the latter, she encouraged members to register on the JRC website and participate in the ongoing public consultation. Ms. Nikolakopoulou also announced that the 4th plenary meeting of the Platform would take place in May 2018 in Lithuania, in the context of the AgroBalt Fair.

Following Ms. Nikolakopoulou's presentation, the Chair opened up the floor for comments during which the following issues were raised:

- FEBA inquired whether the LIFE programme and/or other financial instruments could cover initiatives related to food redistribution.
- Ireland asked for further clarification in regard to the European Parliament's aspirational food waste target and its relation to achieving SDG 12.3. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) stressed the need

for policy coherence and called for stronger cross-cooperation across sectors notably in regard to the ongoing review of the Common Agricultural Policy.

- Several members (SLOW FOOD, FEEDBACK GLOBAL, COPA) highlighted the importance of taking a holistic view of the food supply chain including prevention of losses pre-harvest as well as the need to address the generation of food surplus which can lead to food waste. They also drew attention to the economic losses that farmers have to face due to an unbalanced food supply chain and the transfer of risk upstream towards the producer.

In regard to the abovementioned points, Ms. Nikolakopoulou replied that:

- Projects regarding Circular Economy had been supported to date through the LIFE financial instrument, amongst which some were related to food redistribution and the development of food waste prevention tools; more information on the LIFE programme would be presented at the November Platform meeting. As food waste was a political priority for the Commission, new financial instruments could also be considered within the context of the new Multiannual Financial Framework.
- The European Parliament's amendments to the waste legislation proposal were currently the subject of negotiation by co-legislators as part of the trilogue discussions.
- The food waste measurement methodology, to be proposed by the Commission, would consider food which is wasted post-harvest, in line with the scope of the Waste Framework Directive.

In closing, the Chair indicated that prevention of food losses was a legitimate concern and one which would also be considered by the Commission in the context of its work to prepare the next Common Agricultural Policy (Platform members had been informed of the opportunity to contribute to the Commission's public consultation on the modernisation of the Common Agricultural Policy). She further stated that the introduction of food waste prevention measures within the Waste Framework Directive was an achievement in and of itself, which should not be taken for granted. Finally, she confirmed the Commission's view that farmers should be protected from unfair trading practices and indicated that this issue was one discussed by the High Level Forum for a Better Functioning Food Supply Chain.

2.3. Presentation by the Commission of draft mandate for sub-group on "action and implementation" – discussion with members

The Commission presented the objectives of the new sub-group on "action and implementation" called for by members of the Platform at its first meeting in November 2016. It was explained that the sub-group shall support the Platform and the Commission in sharing of best practices, information and learning related to food waste prevention activities and their results as well as exploring future cooperation in the field of food waste prevention. It should also help identify areas where intervention by actors could prevent losses and waste in the food value chain. The Commission also clarified some organisational aspects mentioning that, as for all sub-groups, participation would be limited to 25 organisations. Members of the Platform would be invited by the Commission to take part in the new sub-group based on their previous experience as well as their activity in the area of food waste prevention.

Following this presentation, Commissioner Andriukaitis thanked all participants for their efforts to fight against food waste on the ground and encouraged them to share their best initiatives with other Platform members as well as with a wider network of stakeholders through the REFRESH Community of Experts.

The Chair introduced the next two agenda items related to the Commission's key deliverables concerning food donation and food waste measurement.

2.4. Subgroup on food donation: update by Commission and discussion with members of final draft EU food donation guidelines

The Commission presented its work in the area of food redistribution, referring to the development of EU food donation guidelines, the creation of digital tools to facilitate information sharing as well as the implementation of a Pilot Project on food redistribution. The EU guidelines aim to help lift barriers and facilitate food donation by clarifying, within the current EU regulatory framework, applicable provisions in EU legislation; these will complement national and sectorial guidelines established in Member States.

The Commission provided an overview of the comments received from members, explaining how these had been incorporated within the final draft text forwarded to the Platform. While some of the remarks concerned the format, others referred to specific issues such as the request to include a "food waste/use" hierarchy. The Commission explained some of the changes implemented following member's input such as: a clarification of the scope of the guidelines focussed on the donation of food products by the holder; an explanation of roles and responsibilities of both Member States and food business operators; further clarification of the concept of "liability" vs "primary responsibility" of food business operators as defined under the General Food Law; the introduction of new sections outlining possibilities for donation of agricultural products or fishery and aquaculture products, to name just a few. The Commission further confirmed that some input provided which contradicted the EU regulatory framework could not be integrated in guidelines whose aim are to clarify existing legal provisions.

The Commission also clarified that while guidelines defined at EU level cannot include specific recommendations for Member States, the document highlights in its introduction some of the areas where Member States may wish to focus when preparing or reviewing existing national legislation and/or guidelines. These relate in particular to matters where national rules prevail (eg liability, fiscal rules).

The EU guidelines on food donation, to be adopted by end 2017, will be disseminated in all EU languages. In order to facilitate sharing of best practice, the Commission will also undertake to translate (into English) existing guidance/rules available in Member States regarding food donation. The Commission invited all participants to contribute to the existing list published on the Commission's food waste website and to identify those documents which they would wish to see translated.

Last but not least, the Commission proposed that the so-called "accompanying document" to the EU food donation guidelines which illustrates how Member States implement relevant provisions of EU legislation could be further expanded by members and become an outcome of the Platform itself. This idea was supported by the Chair as it would allow for ongoing and timely updates and avoid the lengthy administrative process of adoption.

The Chair thanked all members of the Platform and in particular the food donation sub-group for their valuable input and indicated that the EU guidelines on food donation would represent a good benchmark from which to elaborate or complement national, regional or local ones. She then introduced the Commission representatives from DG SANTE, DG MARE, DG AGRI and DG TAXUD and encouraged participants to ask questions related to their respective fields of work.

A summary of the following discussion is provided hereafter.

- Overall members expressed their appreciation for the draft and its value in clarifying EU provisions and complementing Member State rules and/or guidance in the field (FEBA, EuroCommerce, AT, NL, DK, DE, OECD). Members acknowledged that most of their input had been integrated or addressed to a certain extent by the document.
- FEBA inquired as to whether the guidelines could indicate a maximum date by which foods intended for donation must be made available to food banks and other charity organisations in order to allow their effective redistribution to end beneficiaries prior to their expiration date. The Commission replied that this principle could be accommodated within the guidelines without prescribing a specific date by which foods must be donated.
- The issue of differentiating between the notion of "primary responsibility" and "liability" was also discussed, as Austria required further clarification as to how Member States should decide on the best manner in which to document the transfer of property of donated food. The Commission explained that the issue of liability was governed at national level; however, it could support Member States by providing a platform to share solutions and best practices in relation to food donation. The guidelines seek to clarify how the principle of "primary responsibility", as laid down in Article 17 of the General Food Law, applies to food business operators engaging in food donation activities, with each operator responsible for the activity under its specific control. This does not preclude the formal transfer of liability from one actor to another through any agreements or contractual relationships for food donation which food business operators may establish, and which was a matter for consideration by Member States.
- Several Member States (NL, DK, SE) commented on the guidelines' provisions related to eggs as being too restrictive, referring to the obligation that eggs beyond 21-days of laying be processed (with sufficient heat treatment) by food banks and other charities prior to making these available to end beneficiaries. The Netherlands indicated that their national food safety authority was investigating this matter (given that the date marking of eggs, set at 28 days of laying is a "best before" date) and would share the results with the Commission and all Platform members in the future.
 - The Commission explained that whilst table eggs are labelled with a "best before" date, EU food hygiene rules specify that eggs must be delivered to consumers within a maximum time limit of 21 days of laying. In order to respect these requirements but also facilitate redistribution of eggs, the guidelines propose that eggs past 21 days can be made available for further redistribution provided that they are processed (cooked) prior to reaching the final consumer. In all instances, the supply of eggs by a retail food business operator to another establishment (including food banks and other charities) must comply with requirements of Regulation 853/2004 laying down hygiene rules for food of animal origin.
- DG MARE agreed to editorial suggestions made by Germany relating to the section on the Common Organisation of the markets in fishery and aquaculture products.
- Other members required further explanation in regard to the scope of the document, in particular its focus on the obligations of food business operators (excluding private persons who may donate food on an *ad hoc* basis for instance at charity events) as well as its focus on the donation of food by the holder, *i.e.* the provision of food free of charge. Denmark requested further clarification on these aspects and FoodWIN explained that charging a small fee can help NGOs cover operational costs related to

food redistribution and can also be valued by receivers wishing to make a contribution.

- The Commission reconfirmed that the aim of the EU guidelines is to facilitate the redistribution of food free of charge by clarifying how relevant provisions of EU legislation apply to this activity. Whilst these guidelines may be relevant for charity organisations such as social restaurants which, in some instances, may request a nominal payment from the end beneficiary, it is important that the guidance provided is not seen to apply to usual commercial transactions and channels. The Commission further explained that the scope of the guidelines (*i.e.* excluding occasional donation of food by private persons) are in line with that of the General Food Law which excludes private domestic use and preparation of foods. Such practices can be further regulated if/as needed at national level; the Commission explained that some Member States provide further guidance in this regard.
- FAO suggested the replacement of "food surplus" with "food available for recovery and redistribution", in order to emphasize the nutritious value and safety of donated food. The Commission confirmed, on the one hand, that the term "surplus" food is widely employed in many policy frameworks related to food donation and that the very aim of the guidelines is to ensure safe food redistribution practices in compliance with the General Food Law and related EU rules (*e.g.* food hygiene).
- While some members suggested that the guidelines should accommodate more concrete examples (FoodWIN, IT), OECD warned that these might unduly narrow the scope of the document and that, where used, such examples should not be regarded as guidance *per se*.
- The Commission noted Italy's request to be added to the list of countries referenced as having introduced specific provisions in national tax legislation in relation to VAT and food donation.
- The Commission also took note of Italy's suggestion to refer, in the section on the Common Organisation of Markets in agricultural products, to the possibility of processing donated fruits and vegetables withdrawn from the market for free distribution.

The Chair concluded that all comments would be duly considered in preparing a final version of the guidelines to be adopted by the Commission by the end of 2017.

2.5 Subgroup on food waste measurement: update by Commission and discussion on the preparation of EU methodology

The Commission presented an outline of the comments received from the Platform members and the way in which they had been integrated in the document.

While some members called for the establishment of food waste prevention targets, others indicated the need for a concrete definition for food waste that would distinguish between edible and non-edible parts of food, but also clarify the issue of food losses in agriculture. Several comments asked for a clearer delineation between various sectors of the food supply chain, so as to attribute food waste appropriately– *e.g.* waste coming from the food services sector or municipal waste. The Commission explained that a definition of food waste together with a decision on data gathering processes were bound to the outcome of ongoing negotiations related to the Waste Framework Directive. Nevertheless, the Platform would discuss technical solutions and their feasibility, exchange best practices on food waste measurement and discuss quantification going beyond the scope of the legislation. In terms of

scope, the new methodology would only cover food waste within the scope of the Waste Framework Directive (*e.g.* no agricultural biomass used in farming or for energy production).

The need to align the future methodology with the Food Loss and Waste Protocol was reiterated, as well as collaborating with FAO on monitoring SDG 12.3. In regards to measurement methods, the Commission indicated that the document would give Member States the flexibility to set up their own monitoring systems, as well as to decide on their preferred method of data collection.

After presenting an overview of the main changes made to the revised document, the Commission detailed some aspects that needed further consideration, such as whether to include food waste discarded via the sewer or not. Analysing the feasibility of reporting drinks and liquid food waste was mentioned as part of the Commission's future work, together with gathering and sharing information about Member States' practices on measuring household and municipal food waste. The presentation ended with a call for Platform members to share an update on their latest reports and monitoring of food waste practices.

The Chair indicated that the sub-group on food waste measurement would meet in September and reiterated that the Commission's work in this field was also bound to the latest developments in negotiations of co-legislators on the Waste Framework Directive. She then opened the floor for questions and comments.

A summary of the following discussion is provided hereafter.

- Several participants requested the Commission to address practices related to food waste generation, such as last minute order cancellations from retailers, arbitrary application of cosmetic standards, as well as issues related to the redistribution of donated food (FEEDBACK GLOBAL, FoodWIN). The main objective would be to understand the way in which the risk was transferred along the food management chain in order to tackle unfair trading practices, operational shortcomings of food banks etc. The Commission expressed its willingness to engage in constructive dialogue on sector-specific issues with all actors of the food supply chain.
- OSTFOLD RESEARCH, Nofima and Matvett Consortium signalled the fact that limiting the concept of food waste to the scope of the Waste Framework Directive would exclude food surplus destined for animal feed or energy production. Thus, it would be difficult to obtain a clear understanding of the potential of prevention of food loss and food waste along the whole food supply chain.
- In the light of the recent exclusion of street food waste from the scope of the document, FOODSERVICEEUROPE and HOTREC notified the Commission of the fact that the concept was still mentioned under the delineation of the sector included in section 4.4. (last sentence of the first paragraph in page 18 of the document circulated for the meeting) and under the classification of food waste coming from restaurants and food services in the List of Waste. The Commission promised to adjust the text accordingly.
- In the context of food waste discarded via the sewer, AIBI suggested mentioning drinks as part of food waste so as to make consumers more aware of their actions. WRAP also showcased its support for quantifying this type of waste, suggesting that it could be done at a lower frequency. The Commission explained that the measuring methodology was bound to the legal definition of food waste which already encompassed drinks, milk and other beverages. Future communications documents on food waste shall include this clarification.

- While discussing best practices in food waste monitoring, Spain announced its ongoing efforts to calculate food waste at the household level, based on previously existing instruments. In parallel, Spain was also involved in gathering data on primary production with the help of their national system for agricultural income. The Member State promised to share more information at the next sub-group meeting taking place in September.
- The Commission dismissed the possibility of including specific food waste measurement methods within the legislation itself, indicating that these would appear in the annex, guidelines or reports to be developed and shared with Member States.

The Chair thanked all participants for their comments and asked Mr. Anthony Gerard Buchanan, Councillor at East Renfrewshire Council and member of the Committee of the Regions to say a few words about the institution's work in the field of food waste prevention.

Mr. Buchanan reaffirmed the Committee of the Region's commitment to tackling food waste, marking it as a symptom of unsustainable food systems. He then mentioned that the institution had recently adopted an opinion on sustainable food policies, calling upon relevant stakeholders to set up a new EU food policy through a cross-sectorial synergy of regional, agricultural, fisheries, environmental, energy and research policy fields. The Committee of the Regions also organized a workshop on public procurement, highlighting its role in promoting sustainable food systems, as Member States could use public procurement to influence consumer behaviour but also to incentivize the market to produce healthier food. The institution would continue to contribute to the debate by collecting examples of best practice from different regions of the EU.

Mr. Buchanan also referred to Scotland's pledge to reduce food waste by 33% by 2025. Last but not least, he mentioned the efforts made by the Committee of the Regions' canteen to maintain food waste to a 5% annual threshold, in accordance to sustainability standards.

3. FOOD WASTE PREVENTION: ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Digital tools to support cooperation in food waste prevention: update by Commission and REFRESH

The Commission, together with REFRESH, introduced the new digital communications tools intended to support the work of the Platform and other stakeholders in the field of food waste prevention. While the first tool developed by the Commission would be dedicated to Platform members only, helping them share documents, exchange ideas and disseminate events; the REFRESH Community of Experts would reach a wider audience aiming to facilitate sharing of best practice in food waste prevention. In regard to the latter, users would be able to upload and share resources and information, comment and provide feedback on resources, support other members etc. Both on-line tools were scheduled to be launched by the end of 2017.

In order to populate the content of REFRESH Community of Experts, Platform members were asked to send in their initiatives and actions in food waste prevention by filling out a resource template that was to be circulated by the Commission before the user testing phase.

Following the two presentations, the Chair encouraged all participants to register and use the two digital tools, reassuring all Platform members that the Commission would make the

necessary preparations to ensure the hosting of the Community of Experts website once the REFRESH project had come to an end.

A highlight of the comments and suggestions received from Platform members is provided hereafter:

- Ireland suggested that the Community of Experts should include featured articles to increase the visibility of less popular resources.
- In regard to the question raised by Les Restaurants du Coeur as to whether all resources needed to be submitted in English, the Commission encouraged all members to submit resources in their original language while ensuring that the accompanying document describing the work was provided in English. In this way, all users would be able to identify the resource and know of its existence.
- When asked about the dissemination strategy and target group for the REFRESH Community of Experts (FoodWIN), the REFRESH expert explained that the digital tool seeks to reach a wide range of actors along the whole food supply chain and also public authorities. The initial target audience includes stakeholders involved in the REFRESH and FUSIONS projects and also members of the Platform.
- The Netherlands inquired about the future of the Commission's webpage containing examples of best practices in food waste prevention and reduction. The Commission stated that future developments of this webpage were under consideration and that stakeholder feedback was also needed in this regard. The Commission asked all Platform members to revisit and update any resources they might have on the webpage currently. The Commission further explained that existing resources from the Food Waste website could not be transferred to the REFRESH Community of Experts without prior approval from their authors.

3.2 National "frameworks for action": update on "Norwegian model" (project ForMat) and Horizon 2020 project REFRESH, including state-of-play on platform implementation in Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands and Spain; discussion with members

3.2.1 Project ForMat and the "Norwegian model"

Norway opened the session on national frameworks for action by presenting the "Norwegian model" for food waste prevention implemented first through the ForMat project from 2010 to 2015. The project was based on close collaboration between authorities and actors in the food sector, building on knowledge from private initiatives, private-public partnerships, systematic monitoring of food waste since 2010 and voluntary sharing of data.

Even though the initial 25% reduction target had not been reached, the project gathered valuable information on the extent and main causes for food waste across the whole food supply chain and managed to cut food waste by 12%, compared to 2010 data.

Norway announced the publication of a final report containing the results of the ForMat project and some examples of different actions carried out by its members (*e.g.* greater use of "best before" labelling, creative complementary instructions given on food packaging to help consumers store and consume food safely, "buy one pay for one" campaigns in supermarkets *etc.*).

Matvett continue the ForMat-project's efforts in the field, being the food industry's organisation responsible for overall coordination of food waste prevention efforts. Among others, it is launching a new project called "Kutt Matsvinn 2020", which aims to engage half

of the country's hospitality sector in reducing food waste by 20% by 2020. Matvett also features a voluntary agreement between 32 private food manufacturers, agreeing to pay 3% on top of their packaging fee in order to support the work of the Matvett

The "Norwegian model" also includes a negotiated voluntary agreement recently signed by public authorities and 12 food industry organisations across the entire value chain committed to reducing food waste in line with the SDG 12.3 target. The agreement details future actions to be taken by the food sector and public authorities, mentioning actions such as revising food quality standards, investing in research and development in product packaging, establishing systems for reporting and collecting food waste data from households etc

The Chair thanked Norway for sharing information about their project with the Platform whilst questioning whether the creative application of date marking might fall outside the existent regulatory framework. Norway explained that all rules and regulations concerning date marking were respected as the instructions offer additional information to complement the official "best before" label. Austria inquired about the type of materials included in the data collection on food waste, to which Norway clarified that only edible parts were taken into account, including surplus food resources utilised to produce animal feed.

In terms of data sharing and agreeing on a set of tools and standards for measuring food waste (FoodCloud), Norway explained that it had established a common system for a key number of representative manufacturers and retailers who report and share data. FoodWIN asked about the rules that governed the relations between different members of the ForMat project, to which Norway explained that Matvett was owned by the food sector, being its operating partner in relation to public authorities and other actors.

3.2.2 Horizon 2020 REFRESH Project

REFRESH's presentation focused on the project's work in relation to establishment of national frameworks for action and their role in developing models to forecast food waste, finding better uses for surplus food, addressing related environmental aspects etc. The programme aims to produce a significant impact on food waste prevention and reduction by addressing related behavioural aspects and creating new collaborative models between stakeholders. Independent of the sector, all collaborations shared three main features: a food waste reduction target established on a voluntary basis, a common food waste measurement methodology and a practice of result sharing.

REFRESH has built on the experience of collaborative initiatives such as the UK Courtauld Agreement and the FUSIONS project; it engages 26 partners in 6 countries, including China. While designing the national frameworks for action, the project also drew on an analysis of 63 voluntary agreements from across the EU and their success factors. The study (available on REFRESH website) identified five key stages from "Initiation and set up" to "Monitoring and evaluation" and their corresponding success factors, ranging from governmental involvement at an early stage of the project to availability of funding aids. REFRESH also pointed out some of the ingredients of a fruitful collective agreement as being: securing government support; involving key actors in the food supply chain, NGOs, trade associations and civil society, with a focus on fewer but more involved signatories.

Further on, each of the four participant countries in the REFRESH project gave a brief presentation on the state-of-play of their respective national framework for action.

Germany began the round of presentations by describing the structure and working methods of their national framework for action. The project is led by a working group that consisted of 18 members, including businesses, academia, NGOs and government representatives. The plan has established production, retail, households and out-of-home as being the priority fields for action in food waste prevention and reduction and searched to address key issues along the whole food supply chain. Germany's framework for action includes: scientific research; improving food waste data collection; making projections on food waste levels; employee trainings in the retail sector for better information for consumers; and monitoring and evaluation.

Member's efforts and improvements were assessed through a yearly baseline questionnaire, which also revealed that most of the respondents were in favour of using a different measurement unit for food waste than tonnes (issue to be addressed through pilot projects and academic research seeking to establish cross-sectorial methodology for food waste data collection). Prior to ending the presentation, Germany referred to REFRESH as a valuable instrument to support the creation of national frameworks for action in food waste prevention and pointed to the Food Waste Innovation Incubator Day as an example of successful collaboration between federal authorities, stakeholders and other Member States.

The Dutch national framework for action found its roots in the 2009 Dutch policy on sustainable food which set a 20% food waste reduction target by 2015 to be achieved through close cooperation between government and actors from the food supply chain. Public authorities joined forces with the Alliance on Sustainable Food - a private initiative gathering five sector organisations across the whole food supply chain - formulating actions to reduce food waste such as consumer information campaigns, cooperation with food banks, innovation subsidy schemes etc. Even though the initial reduction target had not been reached, the issue of food waste gained more public visibility and became part of many stakeholders' agenda.

Under the REFRESH project, the Circular Economy in Food Taskforce was established as a joint collaboration between public authorities, academia, businesses and NGOs. The taskforce gathers 25 partners who agreed on establishing a common roadmap focussing on delivering concrete actions and creating an ecosystem of circular economy on food in which businesses inside and outside the food supply chain work together to reduce, reuse and recycle food resources. The taskforce has met twice so far in *Three Sixty*, an innovation centre in circular economy that brings together businesses involved in food waste prevention and a waste factory. As the initiative was still in an early phase, the Netherlands promised to share more information on the taskforce's work during the third Platform meeting in November 2017.

Hungary's national framework for action revolves around a partnership between the public and the private sector, initially gathering over 50 members of various backgrounds (businesses, NGOs, academia etc.). As not all members were actively involved in the initiative, the group reduced its size but kept representatives from every stage of the food supply chain, under the coordination of a steering committee. The group followed a "connect and accelerate" strategy, creating a personal and knowledge-based network of actors fighting against food waste. Under the REFRESH umbrella, the Hungarian alliance of public and private entities managed and coordinated three projects in the fruit and vegetable chain, the Horeca chain (focusing on event catering) and food redistribution (mostly capacity building).

The voluntary agreement made under the REFRESH project has facilitated increased cooperation between the Hungarian public administration and private organisations, in a common effort to improve existing national rules in order to prevent and reduce food waste.

Due to lack of data and implicitly of a baseline, food waste estimations based on data from other Member States were employed. In parallel, Hungarian authorities are carrying out a project aiming to establish food waste data at national level.

Spain presented the fourth national framework for action under the REFRESH project. In the case of Spain, where food waste prevention and reduction has already been on the public agenda through a wide range of initiatives, the project aims to gather all actors involved in this field in order to facilitate inter-sectorial cooperation. The project is coordinated by the Research Centre for Agri-Food Economy and Development (CREDA) under the Polytechnic University of Catalonia, who also supports and monitors members' pilot projects and supports food waste measurement and reporting.

During the first meeting of the group, participants were involved in an interactive workshop in order to identify the priorities, hot spots and relevant actors for the project; discuss ways to measure the success of a pilot project and brainstorm for solutions to prevent and reduce food waste across the whole food supply chain. After establishing the group's Terms of Reference, members focused on issues such as the lack of data on food waste across various sectors, the redistribution of perishable foods or the inclusion of inedible parts within the food waste measurement methodology (due to members' divided opinions, a definition of food waste had not been included in the Terms of Reference). They also identified the main focus areas as being primary production, the hospitality sector and households. A voluntary agreement has been signed by 16 members representing the whole food supply chain as well as consumers and public authorities which work together to understand current levels of food waste from production to consumption, raise awareness and promote innovative initiatives. The speaker indicated that CREDA's approach focusses more on assessing the impact of innovative solutions rather than creating a baseline and programme for the country as a whole.

Before opening the floor for comments, the Chair highlighted the importance of public and private cooperation as a key element of all REFRESH's national frameworks for action to help prevent and reduce food waste.

FoodWIN expressed its intention to establish such a framework for action against food waste in Flanders and inquired about the role of cities in such coalitions. Spain replied by offering the example of the Municipality of Barcelona, a member of the Spanish REFRESH project, which had already developed several local food waste prevention programmes before being invited to take part in the coalition.

OECD inquired about the relevance of national frameworks for action in relation to the Commission's on-going work in the field of food waste prevention. The Chair emphasized the Platform's focus on facilitating action and implementation and in that regard the importance of keeping members up-to-date with ongoing developments at national and sectoral levels. She further stated that REFRESH was an EU-funded project designed to support taking effective action to tackle food waste along the whole food supply chain. REFRESH (through its coordinator Toine Timmermans) also intervened by highlighting Platform members' common commitment towards achieving SDG 12.3 together with the need to share best practices. The identification of solutions implemented in some Member States can be a source of inspiration and later be adapted by others. He also added that networking, setting commitments and finding common solutions on a local, regional, national or European level were crucial actions that ensured the success of food waste prevention programmes.

3.3 New "food waste prevention" regulatory frameworks in place in Member States (France, Italy): views of public and private sector organisations on state-of-play and key initiatives achieved to date

3.3.1 France's new food waste prevention regulatory framework

France presented an overview of its work in the field of food waste prevention, referencing the country's national objective to halve food waste by 2025. The issue is amongst the priorities of the National Program for Food and the National Program for Waste Prevention, run by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment respectively, finding their operational application in a "National Pact" signed by 5 ministries and 30 stakeholders. The signatories committed to reach the national objective within the given timeframe.

In terms of legislative measures, the law on combating food waste originated in a 2015 parliamentary report on "36 proposals for a public policy on food waste" which was adopted in February 2016 after discussions within both chambers as well as consultations with stakeholders. The law has introduced a hierarchy in the Environment Code to combat food waste (prevention, human consumption, feed valorisation and composting or energy recovery); reinforced actions within the retail sector (prohibition to destroy edible food; obligation for retailers to partner with food aid charities; establishment of a contract model for food donation between donor and receiver) and encourages a wide range of actions, from introducing food waste prevention in school curricula to including food waste in companies' social and environmental reporting.

France also updated Platform members on its on-going initiatives including: a mapping of food aid charities; creating a list of authorized and forbidden foods for donation according to health regulations; and the launch and implementation of the renewed National Pact on Food Waste.

The French Food Bank Federation shared its perspective on the new food waste prevention regulatory framework and explained its involvement in shaping the legislation. The Federation formed part of the two working groups which prepared the framework and which helped all actors in the food supply chain reach a common position in regards to voluntary agreements and template conventions for food redistribution. Together with other food aid associations, food banks highlighted: the importance of maintaining a certain quality for all donated foods; the expectations of the organisations and people who receive food donations as well as the need to allow a 24-hour timeframe for food banks/other charities to redistribute foods bearing a "use by" date. The legal framework incorporated these requests together with a hierarchy of food waste preventative actions that could be implemented by all actors of the food supply chain including small and medium-sized supermarkets.

In order to facilitate food donation by a wide range of food business operators, including SMEs, the French Food Bank Federation was working on simplifying the process of food redistribution. The federation also strives to improve access to food, set up new partnerships, participate in awareness campaigns and food waste preventative actions and also expressed its interest in product innovation to help prolong shelf life.

A representative of ANIA (the French National Association of Food Industries) explained the involvement of the food industry in tackling food waste, offering a short summary of the organisation's work in the field. As a member of the French National Pact on Food Waste, ANIA has gathered best practices from companies involved in food waste prevention and reduction. These initiatives have been later on included in ANIA's Food Waste Prevention

Charter (e.g. innovative solutions to tackle food losses in primary production). The Charter gathers signatories from across the whole food supply chain committing to food waste prevention action such as improving packaging design, storage conditions, by-product valorisation, optimization of logistics *etc.* Concurrently, companies have also started to raise awareness on food waste among consumers by displaying relevant information on their websites and sometimes on the packaging of their products.

Within the context of the Pact's renewal, ANIA reiterated its commitment towards tackling food waste, mentioning its efforts in the field of food redistribution, as well as its partnership with the French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME), and also expressed its support for the work of the Platform.

3.3.2 Italy: joint presentation of regulatory framework and stakeholder involvement

Italy presented the recently adopted law (Law N° 166/2016) on donating and distributing food and pharmaceutical products whose main aim, in the food sector, is to prevent food waste and increase the recovery of surplus food. The regulatory framework proposes an integrated approach, from harmonizing already existing rules on food donation to facilitating consumer awareness campaigns about food waste. Apart from defining food waste and establishing a hierarchy of use for surplus food, the law also clarifies the type of products suitable for food donation as well as the role and responsibilities of food business operators involved in the redistribution process. Moreover, whilst reconfirming the specific hygiene and food safety rules to be followed by food business operators, it has simplified the administrative burden related to food donation, eliminating the VAT on donated products and facilitating fiscal incentives for companies that decide to redistribute surplus food.

Italy's law seeks to enhance public-private synergies by setting up a "Round Table for the fight against food waste and for food aid" bringing together all relevant stakeholders in the food supply chain and by creating a national fund for projects that facilitate the recovery of surplus food and limit food waste. Last but not least, the framework facilitates information campaigns on food waste prevention and reduction, promoted by different ministries or through private projects.

Italy also indicated some of the first results of the regulatory framework, mentioning on-going initiatives of various ministries (*e.g.* the Ministry of Health working on drafting guidelines to reduce food waste in the catering sector), local authorities (*e.g.* public-private partnerships to promote doggy bags) and agreements with audio-visual channels to disseminate information campaigns. In terms of best practices, Italy presented a few examples of successful collaborations with professionals in health and food safety (*e.g.* veterinarians), food technologists (working on improving shelf life, better food supply chain management *etc.*), preventative medicine organisation (in order to recover frozen food from food businesses) or cruise ship companies (for the recovery and redistribution of surplus food).

Further on, the Chair invited two representatives from private sector organisations to present their views on the French and Italian regulatory frameworks' state-of-play and key initiatives achieved to date.

The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC) focused on the Italian law against food waste, emphasizing its added value through a strong focus on public information campaigns and educational measures in order to facilitate change in consumer behaviour related to food including deeply rooted habits which can lead to food waste. Although achieving such a

change in consumer's food culture and behaviour is a long process, BEUC highlighted consumers' appreciation for small measures such as gleaning or the use of doggy bags, as well as innovative solutions to reduce and prevent food waste. The organisation also shares some best practices across Member States such as food sharing initiatives in Germany or "people's supermarkets" in the UK where chefs cook food close to its expiration date or past the "best before" date which is then sold in the store.

In regard to the French legislation, BEUC commended the focus on food donation but missed a consumer angle in the regulatory framework notably in relation to date marking. French members of BEUC consider that terminology used in date marking and inconsistent practices may contribute to consumer misinterpretation of the meaning of dates leading to food waste. In any event, members welcomed the new legislation as a means of raising overall public awareness and facilitating food waste prevention and reduction.

EuroCommerce suggested that it was important to consider regulatory initiatives within a broader context, taking into account voluntary initiatives of actors involved in food waste prevention. While considering the French regulatory framework, EuroCommerce members pointed out its effectiveness in attracting new companies to engage in food donation, however the main driver for food donation by industry in France has been the corporate tax reduction incentives already implemented some years ago. On the other hand, members indicated the need to further clarify certain food safety issues raised by the new legislation and the administrative burden linked for instance to the need for charities receiving food to be officially registered. Moving to the Italian legislation, EuroCommerce praised its inclusive approach on food redistribution and food waste prevention, which offered tax incentives and simplified bureaucracy for food donation, encouraged communication campaigns on food waste prevention etc. The fact that municipalities could opt out of offering reductions in waste tax to food business operators who redistributed food was signalled as one of the law's weak points.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND WRAP-UP BY THE CHAIR

The Chair expressed hope that the meeting would offer a good base for further discussion between stakeholders and Member States on possible initiatives in food waste prevention and reduction. She also thanked participants for their feedback and active involvement in the Platform's work and highlighted some future actions on behalf of the Commission: establishing the "action and implementation" sub-group and setting up the digital tool dedicated to the Platform's members in order to facilitate communication and sharing of information. At the same time, she indicated the REFRESH Community of Experts as a future tool for best practice sharing, encouraging members to share their initiatives on the website.

The Chair then referred to a few outcomes of the day's discussion. With regard to the food donation guidelines, the Commission would take into consideration comments made by members during the meeting and transform the accompanying document to the guidelines into a future deliverable of the Platform itself. She emphasized the fact that the work on food waste measurement was directly linked to the continuing trilogue negotiations on the Waste Framework Directive, reassuring Platform members that as the methodology would be proposed through an Implementing Act, the Commission would proceed as quickly as possible once the Directive has been adopted. Further on, she invited all participants to reflect on the best practices presented during the afternoon session as well as the national regulatory measures presented which had received positive feedback from stakeholders.

Finally, the Chair announced that the preliminary date for the next meeting of the Platform would be 7 November 2017 and that further information would be disseminated in future through the Platform's digital tool. Before closing the meeting, she thanked all participants for their participation throughout the day, as well as interpreters for their service.