



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



COORDINATING LOCAL AND NATIONAL ACTIONS TO REDUCE FOOD LOSS AND WASTE IN MEDITERRANEAN CITIES

WEBINAR OUTCOMES

KEY MESSAGES

- The **Mediterranean** region faces significant **food loss and waste challenges**, particularly as the urban population continues to grow. The issue threatens regional, as well as global, food security and environmental sustainability, since the Mediterranean is a key food exporter, and food waste contributes to global greenhouse gas emissions.
- Combatting food loss and waste requires **coordinated efforts at local, national and international levels**. Cities have the potential to **drive innovation and systemic change** for the benefit of the environment, society and economy. By reducing food losses and waste, cities can cut greenhouse gas emissions, conserve vital resources, enhance public health and create jobs.
- Through **strategic governance**, cities can identify the context-specific causes of food waste, implement actions to prevent and manage it, and strengthen the technical and managerial capacities of local stakeholders.
- Clear legislative incentives for the private sector** can encourage businesses to adopt more sustainable practices, while national governments can offer **funding and technical support for local municipalities to develop and scale up** innovative food waste management solutions.
- Reducing food waste requires a combination of **legislation, cross-sectoral policies, raising public awareness, changing consumer behaviours** and **innovative measures, such as transforming** unsold products into valuable new foods.
- Scientific research, innovation and education** are essential for addressing food loss and waste by providing practical solutions, facilitating technology transfer and fostering collaboration between public and private sectors to sustainably transform food systems.

SPEAKERS



Moderator:
Louison Lançon
Co-founder and Project Manager,
[Let's Food](#)



Joan Borrell
Deputy Secretary General, Higher Education
and Research, [UfM](#)



Angelo Riccaboni
Chair, [PRIMA](#)



Divine Njie
Deputy Director, Agrifood Systems and
Food Safety Division, [FAO](#)



Oussama Jraied
Deputy Director, Development,
[Municipality of La Goulette](#), Tunisia



Kassab AlShakhanbeh
Manager, [Amman Central Market](#),
Greater Amman Municipality, Jordan



Erwan de Gavelle
Head of Food Policy, Directorate-
General for Food, [Ministry of
Agriculture, Food Sovereignty and
Forestry, France](#)



Gianfranco Romanazzi
Action Chair, Sustainable Network for
agrofood loss and waste prevention,
management, quantification and
valorisation ([FoodWaStop](#))



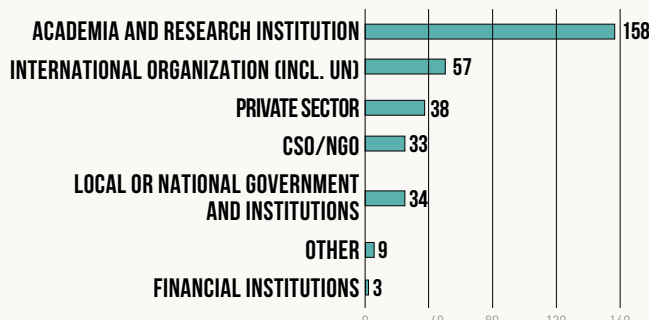
Lydia Merrouche
Founder and Managing Director,
[Fossoul Agricole](#)



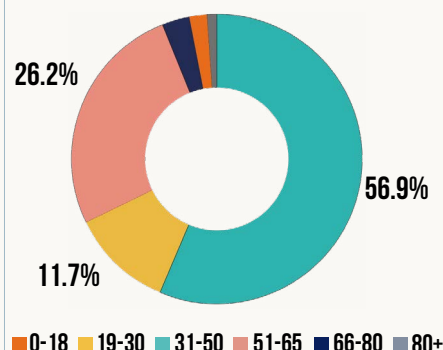
Teodoro Miano
Secretary General, [CIHEAM](#)

Participation statistics | 332 participants from 56 countries. Of which, 244 participants from 17 Mediterranean countries.

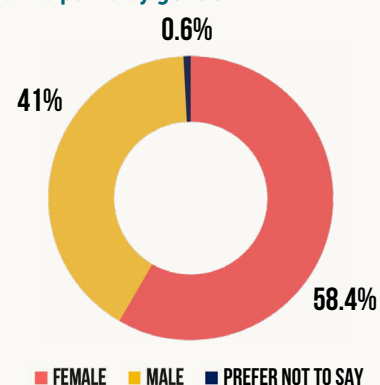
Number of participants by stakeholder group



Participants by age range

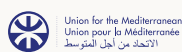


Participants by gender



FOOD LOSS AND WASTE IN MEDITERRANEAN CITIES

Opening remarks were provided by:



Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)

represented by Joan Borrell, Deputy Secretary General,
Higher Education Research

UfM is an intergovernmental Euro-Mediterranean organisation which brings together all countries of the European Union and 16 countries of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean. UfM's mission is to enhance regional cooperation, dialogue and the implementation of projects and initiatives with tangible impact on citizens, with an emphasis on young people and women, in order to address the three strategic objectives of the region: stability, inclusive development and integration. The organisation champions women's rights, job creation, fosters cross-country connectivity efforts and addresses environmental and climate emergencies. The UfM also prioritises grant schemes and programmes to encourage entrepreneurship and job opportunities for young people, recognising their crucial role in shaping the region's future. The organisation is working on a unique instrument to accelerate investment in the blue economy and the creation of a regional civil protection instrument.



Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA)

represented by Angelo Riccaboni, Chair

PRIMA Foundation implements a joint programme, promoted and co-founded by the European Commission and 19 Euro-Mediterranean States to build research and innovation capacities and to develop knowledge and innovation solutions for water, agriculture and food systems in the Mediterranean area. PRIMA research and innovation activities are underpinned by a strong commitment to national, regional, and international networking, and are open to collaboration and synergies among researchers, governmental agencies and private stakeholders. The strategic goal is strengthening innovation capacity, aligning national programmes and building a critical mass of actors in the MED region. PRIMA, entrusted with a total budget of almost EUR 500 million, has funded close to 300 projects since 2018, reaching 2 500 beneficiaries and connecting more than 10 000 researchers in the whole Mediterranean area.



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

represented by Divine Njie, Deputy Director of the Agrifood Systems and Food Safety Division

The FAO Agrifood Systems and Food Safety Division provides strategic leadership in the development of more sustainable agrifood systems, working in close coordination with national governments, food systems practitioners, and international partners, striving to integrate FAO's scientific and economic analysis to provide improved policy guidance and targeted investment for the transformation to more sustainable agrifood systems. FAO has prioritized urban agrifood systems as one of 20 programme priority areas in recognition of the unique position of cities and local governments to drive transformation in agrifood systems locally, nationally and globally.

Food loss and waste presents significant challenges to food security, sustainability, and resource management across the Mediterranean.¹ With over 70 percent,^{2,3} of the region's population living in urban areas – a figure expected to grow in the coming decades⁴ – **cities play a major role as both consumers of food and producers of food waste**. In 2022, the European Union recorded 59 million tonnes⁵ of fresh food lost or wasted, averaging 132 kilograms per person, with households accounting for 54 percent of this total (71 kilograms per person). By comparison, this figure is lower in Eastern Europe, with an average of 53 kilograms per person at household level, and considerably higher in the Near East and North Africa region, with food waste at household levels averaging 114 kilograms per capita annually.⁶

Cities are crucial for addressing food waste management. Over 70 percent of the world's food is consumed in urban areas,⁷ which are also responsible for around 70 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions.⁸ At the same time, 77 percent of the world's severely and moderately food insecure people live in urban and peri-urban areas. Despite these challenges, **cities**

have the potential to drive innovation and systemic change and play a key role in reducing food losses and waste towards more sustainable agrifood systems and a circular (bio)economy.⁹

Adopting a circular bioeconomy approach and reducing food loss and waste in urban areas can provide benefits environmentally, socially and economically. By embracing **circular economy** principles, cities can cut greenhouse gas emissions, create green jobs, and strengthen urban-rural connections. For example, redistributing food surpluses and valorizing waste into valuable products can promote food security and nutrition, strengthen livelihoods, and boost economic opportunities. Food loss and waste reduction can **foster inclusive growth**, creating opportunities for marginalized communities and strengthening urban-rural linkages.

Achieving these co-benefits requires **coordinated actions** at both the national and local levels. National governments can establish policies and legislative frameworks, create incentives and disincentives, promote investments and innovative initiatives, and foster the cross-sectoral and multi-

stakeholder coordination needed to address food loss and waste comprehensively and systemically. At the same time, subnational governments (such as local authorities, municipalities, states, regions and provinces) can influence national policies, by adopting innovative approaches and developing local strategies with benefits that reach far beyond their borders. Coordination between national and local efforts – often referred to as **multi-level governance** – is key to ensuring strategies are sustainable, scalable and effective in the long term.

Mediterranean cities play a pivotal role as key hubs for implementing sustainable solutions. Assessing, managing and reducing food waste requires the proactive involvement of local institutions to create an enabling environment, including improving the handling of waste, both at the level of households and food retailers. To maximize their impact, urban initiatives must be integrated into national and global strategies, ensuring that city actions align with and contribute to larger development

goals. Cities must have the right tools and the appropriate level of authority to make changes.

FAO takes a **systems approach** in its work with cities, recognizing that the interconnectedness of agrifood systems means that when cities invest in sustainable agrifood systems practices, they can simultaneously generate co-benefits in areas like public health, employment and environmental protection.

Effectively tackling food loss and waste requires **two-way coordination between national and local stakeholders**. Cities can and should contribute to the shaping of national policies, while national policies and frameworks must also support cities in implementing reduction strategies and initiatives. The private sector, civil society, and other important actors have a critical role to play and are often the ones leading the way in food waste initiatives in the region.

EMPOWERING SUSTAINABLE FUTURES THROUGH GREEN SKILLS

EXPERIENCE /  MEDITERRANEAN

The [Workshop on Green Skills in the Mediterranean: Education and Research for Sustainable Food Systems](#), held in Zaragoza, Spain, in February 2024 addressed high unemployment rates and skills gaps in the region, emphasizing the role of education and research in fostering sustainable food systems and careers.

The workshop was co-organized by the Union for the Mediterranean and CIHEAM Zaragoza, with collaborative support from the European Training Foundation (ETF), technical guidance from Paeradigms and supported by the German Development Cooperation (GIZ) and the Slovenia Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs. The workshop attracted participants from 15 Euro Mediterranean countries, representing academia, industry, policymakers, and civil society, highlighting the event's multi-sectoral approach to sustainability and regional collaboration.

The workshop aimed to inspire participants to integrate green skills into academic curricula and professional practices, focusing on technical green skills related to sustainable food systems. Through interactive sessions, participants developed strategies for incorporating green skills into their work. Green jobs span various industries, from renewable energy and waste management to tourism and hospitality. Waste reduction is a core green skill, promoting the efficient use of resources, including reducing food loss and repurposing food waste.

2030 GREENER MED AGENDA

COLLABORATION /  MEDITERRANEAN

The Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) [2030GreenerMed](#) Agenda provides a regional structured framework that, based on the coordination of existing and future programmes and projects, creates political and operational convergence to accelerate the transition towards a green, circular and inclusive economy.

The core objective of 2030GreenerMed is to set the framework to coordinate, streamline and promote the efforts in the Mediterranean region – involving UfM member countries and other relevant stakeholders, including regional partners and local authorities, through a participatory approach, to:

- Support the transition towards a green, circular and socially inclusive economy;
- Prevent and reduce pollution on land, air, and sea; and
- Protect, preserve, manage, and restore natural resources in the Mediterranean region within an integrated ecosystem approach, including terrestrial, marine, and coastal dimensions.

Reducing **food waste** including all the stages in the agri-food chain, avoiding the unnecessary use of resources and reducing the generation of waste is a key action under the 2030GreenerMed Agenda.

OUTCOMES OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION

The webinar aimed to address the following key questions:

- **How can national policies and frameworks effectively support cities/local governments in implementing food loss and waste reduction strategies and initiatives?**
- **In what ways can cities drive innovation and contribute to the development of national food loss and waste reduction policies?**

The discussion was moderated by:



Let's Food, France

represented by Louison Lançon, Co-founder and Project Manager

Let's Food is an NGO that helps local authorities in France and worldwide to co-construct sustainable territorial food policies. From the diagnosis to the implementation of a new multi-actor governance, Let's Food works closely with local stakeholders to identify the social, economic and environmental challenges of each aspect of the food system and together define the solutions that need to be implemented.

MUNICIPALITIES LEVY INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS TO COMBAT FOOD LOSS AND WASTE

An overview of strategies to prevent, reduce and manage food waste was presented by:



Municipality of La Goulette, Tunisia

represented by Oussama Jraied, Deputy Director,
Development

La Goulette is a small municipality in the north of Tunisia with nearly 50 000 inhabitants. It is a coastal fishing town containing the main commercial port in Tunisia, handling a large portion of the country's imports and much of its exports, and is linked with Europe by ferry service.



Amman Central Market, Greater Amman Municipality, Jordan

represented by Kassab AlShakhanbeh, Manager

Amman Central Market, established in 1995, serves as a hub for marketing Jordanian agricultural products, handling a significant portion of the nation's fruit and vegetable supply. Greater Amman Municipality is the municipality of the Jordanian capital, Amman, responsible for providing public services to citizens in the city in various sectors (public works, planning, health and agriculture, areas and environment, finance and administration, and community development).

Accurate estimates of food loss and waste in **Tunisia** are lacking. However, it has been estimated that wasted bread in bakeries, hotel units, households and university restaurants costs TUN 100 million (approximately USD 48 million every year).¹⁰ The Municipality of La Goulette has taken action to improve food systems, especially in terms of distribution, consumption and waste management, and contribute towards the Sustainable Development Goals. For example, improvements were made to wholesale and retail fish markets and fruit and vegetable markets were restored and expanded. These actions helped to improve quality standards, improving export opportunities and extending the shelf life of products to reduce waste. In addition, the municipality promotes environmental education in schools and among the general public on reducing food waste and waste management. Building on this existing work, the municipalities of La Goulette and Tunis have been collaborating with FAO on urban food systems transformation under the FAO Framework for the Urban Food Agenda.¹¹ The initiative, which ran from March 2023 to January 2025, aimed to develop **innovative, sustainable and systemic solutions** to reduce urban food waste in both municipalities. Focused on creating a **strategic and governance framework** for the reduction and management of

food losses and waste, it involved collecting and analysing data to identify critical points and causes of food waste, implementing pilot actions for prevention and management, and strengthening the technical and managerial capacities of local actors.¹²

To reduce food loss and waste, La Goulette adopted a three-axes approach:

1. Development of a strategic framework for the prevention, reduction and management of food waste.
2. Creation of a dedicated unit within the municipality to handle food waste.
3. Partnerships with the public and private sector, civil society and various stakeholders at local and regional levels.

La Goulette addresses food loss and waste through four strategic streams: regulation, information and training, intersectoral collaboration, and technology innovation (see box). Stakeholder engagement is a core focus at each stage of the process, building partnerships and local, regional and national levels. Networks of municipalities across Tunisia offer opportunities to share experiences and knowledge and offer mutual assistance. La Goulette, in partnership with other municipalities, is carrying out

an initiative with the Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fisheries on the sale of food products, with plans for a memorandum of agreement with FAO.

In **Jordan**, an estimated 93 kg of food is wasted per person each year, amounting to around one million tonnes of food.¹³ Jordan developed its first National Food Security Strategy 2021–2030, with a target to halve food waste from retailer to consumer by 2030.¹⁴ In 2022, Jordan's Ministry of Agriculture launched the "No Food Waste" initiative with the support of FAO and the World Food Programme (WFP). The initiative aims to support implementation of the national food security strategy by providing an in-depth understanding of food loss and waste, raise awareness and foster positive and responsible production and consumption behaviours.

The Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) is the municipality of the Jordanian capital, Amman. Recognizing that addressing food loss and waste is not just a local challenge, but a shared responsibility requiring international collaboration, GAM partnered with the Municipality of Milan to **exchange knowledge** and implement **innovative solutions** for sustainable food systems, inspiring them to adopt and localize effective practices. A key activity carried out by GAM is converting food losses into valuable resources by transforming organic food waste into high-quality compost, reducing waste and contributing to sustainable agriculture. In 2024, GAM, in collaboration with FAO and Let's Food, launched a comprehensive process to assess food loss and waste in Amman

(see box below). The initiative aims to establish a sustainable framework for food waste management while addressing the **root causes** and the larger **systemic issues** contributing to food loss in Amman.

Local authorities like GAM are uniquely positioned to drive change through policies, public awareness campaigns and on-the-ground action. The municipality has prioritized citizen engagement, launching **education programs** to raise awareness about the environmental, economic and social consequences of food waste. These initiatives aim to foster a culture of sustainability among individuals and communities. From the perspective of GAM, there is great potential for national frameworks to further support cities like Amman in implementing food waste reduction strategies. For example, **clear legislative incentives for the private sector** could encourage businesses to adopt more sustainable practices. Additionally, national governments can offer **funding and technical support for local municipalities to develop and scale up** innovative food waste management solutions.

Combatting food loss and waste requires coordinated efforts at all levels - local, national and international. Collaborating with partners like the Municipality of Milan, global organizations such as FAO and WFP, and NGOs such as Let's Food, the municipalities of La Goulette and Greater Amman are leveraging knowledge sharing to implement food loss and waste reduction strategies and initiatives.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FOR STRATEGIC FOOD WASTE REDUCTION

EXPERIENCE /  TUNISIA

The Municipality of La Goulette, Tunisia, with a rich seafood gastronomy, identified a problem with food waste following an assessment of households, markets and restaurants. In response, the municipality established four strategic streams to tackle food waste, involving partners at local, regional and national levels at each stage:

1. **Regulation:** La Goulette is exploring the possibility of adopting new rules and decrees to legislate food waste. In addition, an entity within the municipality has been created to address food waste and food security.
2. **Information and training:** With the objective to work with children to create behaviour change, La Goulette engages with primary schools, kindergartens, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Women, Family, Childhood and Seniors, Tunisia.
3. **Intersectoral collaboration:** To enhance and recycle waste, the municipality collaborates with the National Agency for Waste Management, active across Tunisia, and other entities. La Goulette received a TUN 50 000 loan (approximately USD 15 000) to set up a waste management plan working on enhancing waste for a circular economy.
4. **Technology innovation:** La Goulette collaborates with Tunisia's National Environmental Protection Agency, as well as researchers, experts that work on sustainable development and associations to work on initiatives and applications that can be used by citizens to identify the root causes of waste and potential solutions.

COLLABORATION AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING ON FOOD LOSS AND WASTE

EXPERIENCE / JORDAN

Since the beginning of 2024, Greater Amman Municipality, Jordan, has been tackling the pressing issue of food waste, in collaboration with the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) and NGO Let's Food, with the support of FAO. Throughout the year, Amman and Milan have engaged in peer learning, sharing their unique perspectives and experiences. Let's Food has played a key role in facilitating these exchanges, providing essential support to Amman in the development of its Food Waste Management Action Plan. The plan is based on a participatory assessment of food losses and waste in Amman, incorporating insights gathered during two workshops with local stakeholders. This collaborative approach ensures the plan reflects the city's specific needs and opportunities, and it will be pivotal for the operationalization of food system transformation at the urban level.

In December 2024, Amman hosted an international two-day workshop, [*Together in Action on Food Losses and Waste at City Level: Shared Learning of Practices and Experiences Towards Sustainable and Inclusive Agrifood Systems Transformation*](#). This event brought together municipalities and Jordanian stakeholders to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing, with a focus on reducing food loss and waste at the city level. It will also serve as the official launch of the Food Waste Management Action Plan for Amman.

SOLUTIONS FROM FIELD TO FORK

EXPERIENCE / MEDITERRANEAN

PRIMA takes a [holistic approach](#) to addressing food loss and waste in the Mediterranean, encompassing two dimensions: **prevention**, which focuses on implementing diverse solutions to minimize losses from production through to market, and a **restorative approach** that prioritizes recycling and valorization.

Prevention: from production to market: PRIMA's approach looks at food loss across the entire cycle – from pre-production all the way to the consumer. By funding cutting-edge research and innovation, PRIMA focuses on several key stages – pre-production (e.g. supporting research into plant and animal genetics, as well as ecology, to develop resilient crops and breeds), production (e.g. finding new methods for pest control and improving farm management techniques to reduce these risks), post-harvest and transport (e.g. improving food safety, quality standards, and traceability across the supply chain) and at the consumer level (e.g. promoting the development of sustainable packaging materials that extend the shelf life of products).

Restorative approach: transforming waste into valuable resources: PRIMA embraces a restorative approach to tackling food loss by transforming waste into valuable resources through recycling and valorization strategies. Projects such as FrontAg Nexus and ADVAGROMED focus on repurposing agricultural by-products to create fertilizers and livestock feed, contributing to more sustainable and resilient farming systems. ADVAGROMED specifically harnesses the power of insects as bioconverters of local by-products, utilizing insect products like frass (insect droppings) and live larvae to support agroecological practices. Similarly, the FrontAg Nexus project integrates diverse technologies such as hydroponics, aquaponics, insect farming, vermiculture, and agro-photovoltaics to optimize resource use in agriculture.

PROMOTING BEHAVIOUR CHANGE AND INNOVATION



Fossoul Agricole, Algeria

represented by Lydia Merrouche, Founder and Managing Director

Fossoul Agricole is an eco-responsible Algerian company founded by Lydia Merrouche, a committed entrepreneur advocating for sustainable and nature-respecting food systems. The name Fossoul, meaning "seasons" in Arabic, pays homage to the natural rhythm of the earth and the cycle of crops. Established in 2018, Fossoul initially launched a home delivery service of organic seasonal fruit and vegetable baskets, highlighting local production. In 2019, the company expanded into artisanal food processing, guided by a strong vision: nothing is wasted, everything is transformed. Lydia Merrouche has also collaborated with municipalities and institutions in Algeria and France to develop urban farms, educate youth on sustainable agriculture, and promote innovation in organic waste management through composting initiatives. Fossoul Agricole embodies a holistic vision of agriculture, where every resource is valued, every product is respected, and sustainability goes hand in hand with ethics and social commitment.



Sustainable Network for agrofood loss and waste prevention, management, quantification and valorisation (FoodWaStop)

represented by Gianfranco Romanazzi, Action Chair

The FoodWaStop COST project addresses the challenges of food loss and waste (FLW) and food security, aiming to: (i) build an interdisciplinary and multi-actor European Network that will also connect with non-EU Mediterranean countries, to promote knowledge on FLW beyond the state of the art; (ii) determine incidence of FLW in the critical points of the fruit and vegetable value chain; (iii) foster technological innovations and sustainable management strategies to reduce and prevent FLW; and (iv) valorize agrofood waste to promote a circular bio-economy.

The French Ministry of Agriculture and Food prepares and coordinates the Government's policies in the fields of agriculture, agri-food business, forest and wood industry, fisheries and aquaculture. In close collaboration with the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Ministry of Health and Solidarities, it prepares and deploys the Government's policy in the area of food. It also participates in the implementation of the Government's policy for international trade, representing the French Government in international bodies and organizations.

Tonnes of fruit and vegetables are wasted every year because they are produced in excess or not sold. One-fifth of food produced for human consumption is lost or wasted globally, amounting to one billion meals a day.¹⁵ Fossoul Agricole was established based on a simple idea: that **nothing should be thrown away**. The organization has undertaken several initiatives to transform unsold food and vegetables that do not comply with commercial standards. When supermarket distributors only accept very standard-looking fruit and vegetables, this causes other perfectly good produce to go to waste. Fossoul recovers surplus harvests as well as so-called "ugly" or non-standard fruits and vegetables – those that do not meet aesthetic or size criteria – to turn them into healthy and delicious products: jams, preserved vegetables, spreads, compotes, soups, and more.

All products are handmade using traditional methods, free of additives and preservatives, and based on organic produce. The objective is twofold: to reduce food waste by giving a second life to unsold crops, and to promote responsible, local, and circular consumption. Fossoul plays a key role in raising awareness among consumers, valorizing agricultural waste, and structuring short food supply chains in both urban and rural areas. This approach not only addresses excess production but also raises consumer awareness and **challenges perceptions of so-called "ugly" food**.

In Algeria, Fossoul Agricole has worked with municipalities to raise awareness among local farmers of the importance of recycling excess production and supported them in finding networks to distribute their products to consumers. In France, the organization launched a rooftop farm initiative to produce food locally and recycle organic waste for the health of soil. International authorities could play a key role by offering financial incentives to private businesses that fight against food waste, as well as creating structures for redistributing products and launching awareness campaigns to highlight the importance of consuming local, seasonal products.

FoodWaStop, funded by the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST), aims to establish a sustainable research network of multidisciplinary stakeholder groups from different countries, with the common goal of analysing and preventing food loss and waste. Currently, participants from 50 different countries are working to set up protocols to prevent, manage and quantify

food loss and waste, and reuse the waste in a circular economy. As part of its work to support young researchers and innovators, FoodWaStop is running a training school in Thessaloniki, Greece in 2025. Young researchers will learn about modern methods used to prevent and manage pre- and post-harvest diseases of fruit and vegetables. They will acquire professional skills and knowledge enabling them to become champions in sustainable agriculture and resilient food chains. Webinar participants were invited to contribute to the network and join upcoming activities, such as the FoodWaStop Conference.¹⁶ As a COST Action, the project funds short-term strategic missions, allowing researchers to carry out exchanges with labs and companies in other countries.

INCENTIVES AND AWARENESS ARE KEY TO ADDRESSING FOOD LOSS AND WASTE

An estimated 61 percent of food waste comes from households.¹⁷ Consumers play a crucial role in waste management. Recognizing the need to change consumer behaviour, the FoodWaStop project has launched a [survey](#) on household food waste, gathering responses from 1 000 participants so far from various countries. FoodWaStop encourages people to rethink their daily habits, since consumer behaviour directly contributes to waste. Simple actions, such as checking what is in the fridge before going shopping, being mindful of expiration dates and optimal storage conditions, can help to reduce food waste. By engaging stakeholders from across the agrifood value chain – from farm to fork – FoodWaStop aims to create a knowledge platform to promote innovation, provide guidelines for consumers, and foster dialogue with policymakers, drawing attention to the social and economic implications of food loss and waste.

In **France**, municipalities and local governments play a critical role in managing land use, school meals and waste. Responsibilities are often shared across territories, with strategies developed collaboratively through networks of local governments pooling resources to promote sustainable management. These efforts involve a broad range of stakeholders – producers, processors, local governments, civil society and consumers – to identify concrete solutions well suited to that particular environment and synergies on land and food-related issues, through territorial food projects. The actions of local governments are guided by national policies and programmes, such as the National Programme on Nutrition and Health and a National

Food Programme. The National Food Programme has been built around three core themes: social justice, combating food waste and food education, and two horizontal foundations: territorial food projects and institutional catering services.¹⁸

To address food waste specifically, local governments are required to create **prevention plans** for household and assimilated waste. These plans encourage collaboration between local and public entities to improve waste management. One key area of focus is reducing food waste in schools. It is mandatory to use diagnostic tools to measure how much food is being wasted within schools and come up with a solution. This data informs actions to reduce food waste while improving the quality of school meals, with a target of sourcing at least 50 percent sustainable and quality products, including at least 20 percent of organic products. Surplus edible food is also redirected through local organizations to support those in need.

Further initiatives include establishing networks within municipalities to mobilize actors across the food chain. These networks share information, such as examples of innovative projects and good practices. At national level, the central government collaborates with local authorities to develop solutions. The French Agency for Ecological Transition (ADEME) is carrying out studies on the food chain – covering production, distribution, transport and processing – and identifies local initiatives and waste-saving systems that could be replicated elsewhere. These combined efforts aim to minimize food waste and create more sustainable food systems.

Supporting food territorial initiatives initiated by municipalities is a key focus, with more than 450 active territorial food projects across France. Bringing all of the stakeholders in a specific geographical area together, whether they are distributors, civil society, artisans, or others, plays an essential role in accelerating the transition to better agrifood systems.

ANTI-FOOD WASTE LABEL

EXPERIENCE /  FRANCE

France has introduced a [national label](#) awarded to entities demonstrating dedication to reducing food waste along the food chain, such as supermarkets, suppliers, restaurants and catering companies. The initiative aims to recognize players that contribute to national objectives to reduce food waste by 50%, under the Anti-Waste for Circular Economy law. The anti-food waste labels are issued by certification bodies approved by the Ministry of Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion and are valid for three years. The food waste reduction certification consists of three levels, each represented by 1-3 stars:

- Level 1: “Commitment” – The establishment has recognized its food waste and initiated a general food waste reduction approach, without yet specifically targeting the sources of waste.
- Level 2: “Mastery” – A targeted and long-term strategy to reduce food waste is in place, with indicators to measure waste reduction against targeted sources of waste.
- Level 3: “Exemplary” – A comprehensive and sustainable approach to reducing food waste is in place, with advanced indicators and the implementation of relevant actions demonstrating effective long-term waste management.
- Special mention: Level 3 may be accompanied by a special mention for those who obtain more than 120 points on the audit. This mention attests that an establishment places food waste at the heart of its concerns, getting closer to “zero food waste”.

SCIENCE, INNOVATION AND EDUCATION TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE

The closing remarks were delivered by:



[International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies \(CIHEAM\)](#)

represented by Teodoro Miano, Secretary General

Established in 1962, CIHEAM is a Mediterranean intergovernmental organization composed of 13 Member States. It operates through its four Institutes based in Bari (Italy), Chania (Greece), Montpellier (France), and Zaragoza (Spain), and the Headquarters based in Paris. All the activities of the CIHEAM are based on a bottom-up collaboration approach and are problem-solving oriented, in relation to the specific needs of the countries. CIHEAM's mission is structured around 4 pillars of development (Protecting the planet, Food security and nutrition, Inclusive Development, Crises and resilience) and divided into 15 thematic priorities. CIHEAM's Strategic Agenda 2025 and its Action Plan aim to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Mediterranean in specific fields.

The Mediterranean region faces significant challenges with food loss and waste, particularly as the urban population continues to grow. The issue threatens global food security and environmental sustainability, as cities generate substantial waste, primarily from households. However, cities also have the potential to drive innovation and systemic change. **Reducing and repurposing food waste benefits the environment, society and economy** by cutting greenhouse gas emissions, conserving resources, improving public health, creating jobs and boosting innovation. Achieving these benefits requires coordinated action and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

COORDINATED ACTION IN CITIES CAN PROTECT RESOURCES, CREATE JOBS AND BOOST INNOVATION

One key aspect highlighted is the concept of “knowledge waste”. The loss and waste of human resources and knowledge due to unemployment, lack of education, brain drain and the disappearance of local knowledge impedes development. For instance, the loss of traditional farming practices and local knowledge about crops and food preparation could result in less sustainable and resilient food systems. Similarly, brain drain from rural areas deprives agricultural communities of skilled workers and innovators.

Food production requires substantial inputs of natural resources, such as water, land and energy. When food is lost or wasted, these resources are also lost. From production to consumption, inefficiencies in harvesting, storage, transportation, processing and supply chain management exacerbate waste. Addressing this requires investment in infrastructure, technology and training from farmers and food processors.

As major food consumers, urban areas contribute significantly to waste, with factors like variety, accessibility, affordability and quality of food in cities affecting food consumption and waste patterns. Effectively managing food loss and waste in

cities requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses the entire urban food system, from production to consumption and waste management. The circular bioeconomy offers a promising strategy for sustainable food systems. **By adopting circular economy principles, food waste can be transformed into valuable resources** such as compost, animal feed and biogas, while reducing methane emissions and creating jobs. A 2021 paper¹⁹ by Daniel Welch and collaborators in the *Journal of Consumer Culture*, explored the framing of food waste reduction in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The authors emphasize that the current framing of food waste is one of distributed responsibilities, rather than

individual consumer responsibility. This distributed responsibility includes retailers, suggesting that the idea of solely blaming the consumer for food waste is becoming outdated.

Scientific research, innovation and education are crucial to addressing food loss and waste and transforming food systems sustainably. These efforts provide solutions, facilitate technology transfer and foster collaboration between the public and the private entities. The SFS-MED platform, which CIHEAM is firmly connected to, exemplifies the importance of multi-stakeholder approaches.

Reducing food loss and waste is crucial to create sustainable food systems and achieve food security for everyone, demanding action from all stakeholders, including individuals, the private sector and governments. Finally, public food procurement programmes play an important role, supported by small farmers, improving nutrition in public institutions like schools, while encouraging sustainable farming practices. Cities, through policies and initiatives, can drive sustainable food consumption and minimize waste, making them pivotal players in the transition to sustainable food systems.

SFS-MED PLATFORM

COLLABORATION /  MEDITERRANEAN

The [SFS-MED Platform](#) is a multi-stakeholder initiative co-led by FAO, CIHEAM, UfM and PRIMA as an affiliated project of the One Planet Network's SFS Programme. The Platform is a **forum** for multi-stakeholder dialogue and collaboration, a **network** for strengthening knowledge sharing and capacity building, and a **catalyst** for regional cooperation on priority themes for sustainable agrifood systems transformation in the Mediterranean. The SFS-MED Platform is open to all agrifood systems stakeholders in the Mediterranean region and aims to create a community to leverage and share the knowledge, experience and skills of agrifood systems actors across the Mediterranean region towards concerted action for the sustainable transformation of agrifood systems. Contact the [SFS-MED Platform's Coordination Desk](#) for further information about the modalities of engagement.

The [Food is Never Waste Coalition](#) aims to halve food waste by 2030 and to reduce food losses by at least 25 percent. Food loss and waste reductions in line with SDG 12.3 can be achieved through investment in food loss prevention technologies and sustainable cold chains, value chain collaboration, consumer behaviour change programmes, and circular food systems transitions.

The Food is Never Waste Coalition was launched at the Food Systems Pre-Summit in Rome in 2021. It brings together leading entities the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), World Resources Institute (WRI), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

To that end, and through its initiatives to achieve SDG target 12.3, the Coalition seeks to:

- Halve food waste by 2030 and to reduce food losses by at least 25 percent;
- Create more sustainable and resilient food systems that seek to ensure food loss and waste are minimized;
- Build and strengthen collaboration throughout food systems, between member states and organisations to ensure learning and sharing of best practice; and
- Promote investment in food loss and waste reduction.

The [#123 Pledge](#), launched during the 27th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27), is the first initiative of the Coalition. The “123 Pledge” is coordinated by Champions 12.3, UNEP and FAO. It is also supported by the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), WWF, and Rabobank.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This webinar was designed within the framework of the SFS-MED initiative. Deep appreciation is due to the SFS-MED Platform’s Coordination Desk (CIHEAM, FAO, PRIMA, UfM), with a specific mention for the *ad hoc* team who curated the design of this webinar (in alphabetical order): Antonella Autino (PRIMA), Laura De Matteis (Agrifood Systems and Food Safety Division – ESF, FAO), Tommaso Mattei (ESF, FAO), Jacopo Schürch (ESF, FAO), Yasmine Seghirate (CIHEAM), Alessandra Sensi (UfM), Afef Tlili (UfM), José Valls Bedeau (ESF, FAO). Jane Feeney (ESF, FAO) drafted this outcome document. The graphic layout is by Simone Mari.

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RESOURCES

The recording of the webinar is available at this [link](#) and the agenda of the webinar is available at this [link](#).

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This webinar was organized in the framework of the [Food is Never Waste Coalition](#)

The SFS-MED Platform is an affiliated project of the One Planet Network's Sustainable Food Systems Programme

This document was produced with financial assistance from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of FAO and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the Italian Government.



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For further information and contacts:
coordinationdesksfsmplatform@iamb.it