

Eight recommendations for advancing Food Loss and Waste reduction

Justification and purpose

To better understand the magnitude of the Food Loss and Waste (FLW) problem, and the scale of the potential opportunities to achieve the new Food Waste (FW) reduction targets, of 10% in processing and manufacturing and 30% per capita at retail and consumption by 2030, established in the revised Directive (EU) 2025/1892, is crucial to know how much and where along the supply chain various foods are wasted. The FW quality data reported by the MS show that the challenges for the future are still on more detailed data for policy-making (FW categorisation) and better quality and comparable data based on better harmonisation of national collection methods.

Currently, several frameworks and definitions are being applied in FW quantification which ends in disaggregation of data. Nevertheless, efforts for harmonisation are being taken by the adoption of innovative technologies and proper data collection methods and measurement tools, to assure quality of primary data, accurate weight and categorisation.

WASTELESS project developed tools for FLW measurement, management and monitoring and tested them in different countries and different Food Supply Chain (FSC) sectors (processing, distribution and consumption). Its results provided feedback and perspectives about the use of the current FW regulatory framework and the adoption and implementation of these innovative technologies in the different FSC sectors.

This policy brief outlines evidence-based recommendations to help policy decision-makers in (i) strengthen commitment to the FW regulatory framework, and (ii) encourage active engagement in the adoption and implementation of innovative technologies and (iii) in the achievement of FW reduction targets.

Key messages

Adopt a common framework for FW quantification in all EU-MS

Several frameworks and definitions are being applied in FW quantification which ends in disaggregation of data. A common framework is needed to set the baseline for effective and efficient FW measurement and reduction methods with the goal to promote sustainability across the FSC. In this context, WASTELESS proposed a common general framework for harmonisation, which includes a separate collection sector assigned to production, processing, distribution and consumption stages to facilitate the identification of FLW causes and reduction strategies, and markets to recognise food product trades at production and processing.

Promote decision support for the use of innovative technologies and data collection methods in FLW quantification

The adoption of innovative digital technologies, including data collection methods and measurement tools, is considered promising across all sectors of the FSC. However, their successful implementation depends on balancing technical capabilities with usability, cost-effectiveness, and integration into real operational conditions. Also, needs and expectations vary significantly across the FSC, reflecting country- and sector-specific priorities related to usability, interoperability, and data management. The current market offers a wide range of tools for FLW measurement, monitoring, and management. While some solutions are well suited to certain sectors or companies, they may not adequately address the needs of others, even within the same sector. Differences in company size, operational practices, and language availability further are among others influence the suitability and adoption of these tools.

Tailored decision-support mechanisms are essential to support food chain actors in identifying and implementing the most appropriate solutions. In this context, WASTELESS developed a decision-support toolbox that enables all FSC actors to engage in FW measurement, monitoring and management through personalised guidance on digital tools and methodologies adapted to specific food commodities, FSC stages, and geographical locations.

Foster effective partnerships within and across sectors to co-create FLW measurement, monitor and management tools

Co-creation and multi-stakeholder partnerships are increasingly recognised across the FSC as essential for developing effective tools and strategies to reduce FLW, although their level of maturity differs between sectors:

Food industry. researchers, managers, and external experts are being involved in developing internal innovation platforms and digital tools, particularly for testing AI-based solutions. However, collaboration is still largely company-driven, with limited openness to fully integrated co-creation approaches involving broader stakeholders across the supply chain.

Food retail. partnerships are well established particularly in leading retailers that connect producers, industry actors, and retailers to manage surplus and create circular economy solutions together with researchers. Stakeholder engagement is considered strong because partnerships provide clear economic benefits for producers and retailers alike.

Food services. several partnerships already exist focusing on common standards for FW measurement and monitoring. However, these collaborations remain uneven across EU-MS, and challenges in translating high-level commitments into practical implementation at site level persist due to staff routines and operational constraints.

Households. consumers are widely recognised as key actors in reducing FW, although their direct involvement in partnerships and collaborative initiatives remains limited. Nevertheless, consumer research and behavioural studies are essential for designing effective interventions, which should be developed collaboratively with stakeholders and

public authorities. National programmes play an important role in connecting researchers, companies, and authorities thereby supporting long-term behavioural change and enabling more effective FW prevention strategies.

Revise the regulatory framework to support FW categorisation reporting while ensuring privacy and data protection

The establishment of a common EU-wide categorisation framework was considered essential to improve consistency and comparability across partnerships, companies branches and/or affiliates, sectors and countries. This harmonisation would support more accurate reporting obligations, facilitate benchmarking among companies and MS, and strengthen monitoring progress towards FW reduction targets.

Clear legal frameworks to guarantee that data shared for research, monitoring, or littering prevention purposes would not be used by competent authorities for punitive actions. Strengthening confidentiality protections and building trust among companies, researchers, and public authorities were therefore identified as key strategies to encourage wider adoption of data-sharing practices and digital FW management tools.

These recommendations are relevant across all FSC sectors, with particularly strong implications for the food retail and food industry sectors.

Enhance alignment and coordination between EU-level initiatives and national regulatory frameworks

The fragmentation of legislation across EU, national, regional, and local levels make it challenging for food industry to fully understand and consistently comply with FW reduction requirements across different jurisdictions.

Flexibility in translation EU requirements to national frameworks is crucial, followed by voluntary agreements supported through coordinated national strategies to facilitate implementation. To have effective voluntary agreements it is important to identify barriers at an early stage, learn from the best practices and agree upon measurable targets supported by clear technical guidelines. The coordinated national strategies should foster continuous dialogue between national authorities and FSC stakeholders, establish dedicated working groups to contribute to national waste prevention programmes, and ensure that operators are adequately prepared to meet the emerging FW reduction targets.

Engage stakeholders in FW quantification with incentives and perceived benefits

Financial incentives are essential to strengthen commitment to the FW regulatory framework and encourage active engagement in the development and adoption of FW measurement, management and monitor tools. Across all sectors, tax reductions, relief on waste-related taxes, and clear return on investment (ROI) were identified as key motivators. Reinforcing the perception that FW reduction is generally a win-win strategy delivering both economic and sustainability benefits is also a key strategy. Examples to each sector are as follows:

Food industry. facilitate access to banking loans, municipality waste tax relief, certification schemes for business reputation in both B2B (business to business) and B2C (business to consumers) contexts, promote incentives linked to ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) reporting.

Food retail. tax reductions for donating food, simplification of compliance requirements across different regulatory contexts, and stronger support for circular valorisation pathways.

Food service. fiscal incentives, recognised labels or certifications that could valorise restaurants implementing FW reduction practices and improve their market positioning, strong evidence from real case studies demonstrating environmental and economic benefits, proactive national legislation and policy guidance.

Strengthen targeted training across the food sectors through accessible, user-oriented approaches that demonstrate clear ROI

Targeted training is recognised as an important and generally feasible measure to support FLW reduction, although costs and implementation challenges vary between sectors. However, it is agreed that targeted training can generate financial returns when it contributes effectively to FW reduction, making it a cost-effective investment over time. It is also recognised the existing significant gap in university curricula and higher education programmes related to FLW measurement, management and monitor, underlining the need for stronger integration of these topics into formal education and professional training systems. The views of each sector are as follows:

Food industry. feasible but often difficult to implement in practice, despite the existence of a broad market offer from private consultants at standard market prices.

Food retail and Food services. feasible considering investment costs and expected ROI.

Create awareness campaigns integrating behavioural insights, measurable actions and cross-sector collaboration

Awareness campaigns are most effective when they go beyond communication and are combined with behavioural insights, measurable actions, and visible food redistribution or valorisation initiatives. The figures foreseen for each sector are as follows:

Food retail and Food services. supported more through practical initiatives than traditional campaigns.

Households. integrated approaches that combine awareness with measurement tools, separate waste collection, and deeper analysis of the “food environment,” including interactions between home, schools, retail, and food services.

Description of the policy recommendations and their advantages and disadvantages

Policy recommendation	Description	Main advantages	Main disadvantages	Cost & feasibility of implementation	Equity considerations	Stakeholders' responsibilities
<p>Adopt a common framework for FW quantification in all EU-MS</p>	<p><i>Aims</i> to establish a harmonised framework for FW quantification across all EU-MS</p> <p><i>The approach</i> improves the consistency, transparency, and effectiveness of FW monitoring and policymaking</p>	<p>Improved comparability and consistency of FW data</p> <p>Better identification of FW hotspots and causes</p> <p>Increased transparency and accountability</p> <p>Stronger policy coordination across the EU</p> <p>Enhanced stakeholder engagement</p>	<p>High implementation complexity</p> <p>Significant administrative burden</p> <p>Risk of reduced flexibility</p>	<p><i>Low to medium costs</i> for the development</p> <p><i>Medium to high costs</i> if existing infrastructures and digital readiness needs to be changed</p> <p><i>Feasibility</i> low – households low to moderate – SMEs and small producers moderate – food services and public authorities high – large retailers and food industry</p>	<p><i>Risks of inequity</i> SMEs may face disproportionate compliance costs smaller MS may have limited administrative capacity large corporations may adapt more easily due to greater resources rural actors may lack access to technical support and infrastructure</p> <p><i>Mitigation measures</i> provide financial assistance for SMEs support capacity-building programmes ensure multilingual guidance materials allow phased implementation timelines provide technical support in lower-capacity regions</p>	<p><i>European institutions</i> establish legal framework coordinate EU-wide implementation, provide technical guidance and funding</p> <p><i>National governments & authorities</i> transpose EU requirements into national systems oversee implementation support stakeholder training and compliance</p> <p><i>FSC actors</i> implement common framework</p> <p><i>Research & academy</i> assess framework effectiveness</p> <p><i>Associations & NGOs</i> facilitate stakeholder engagement support training and awareness</p>

Policy recommendation	Description	Main advantages	Main disadvantages	Cost & feasibility of implementation	Equity considerations	Stakeholders' responsibilities
<p>Promote decision support for the use of innovative technologies and data collection methods in FLW quantification</p>	<p>Aims to support FSC actors in selecting and implementing appropriate innovative technologies and data collection methods for FLW measurement, management and monitoring</p> <p>The approach promotes the development of decision-support mechanisms that help stakeholders identify the most suitable tools according to their food commodity, FSC stage, company size, geographical location, operational characteristics, language requirements and technical capacity</p> <p>The WASTELESS decision-support toolbox is an example of this approach</p>	<p>Improved accuracy and consistency of FLW quantification</p> <p>Better matching of tools to operational needs</p> <p>Increased efficiency and operational optimisation</p> <p>Greater accessibility for different FSC actors</p> <p>Encourage harmonisation of digital standards and interoperability</p> <p>Support for EU sustainability and reporting objectives</p>	<p>Highly dependent on collaborative efforts and FAIR data</p> <p>Interoperability and standardisation challenges</p> <p>Risk of over-complexity and low usability</p> <p>Data privacy and governance concerns</p> <p>Dependence on technical support and maintenance</p>	<p>Low to medium costs</p> <p>moderate public or institutional funding</p> <p>low administrative and operational costs</p> <p>Feasibility</p> <p>low to moderate – households</p> <p>moderate – food services, SMEs and small producers</p> <p>high – large retailers and food industry</p>	<p>Risks of inequity</p> <p>SMEs may lack financial capacity for digital investments</p> <p>smaller businesses may have limited technical expertise</p> <p>rural areas may face weaker digital infrastructure and connectivity</p> <p>Mitigation measures</p> <p>provide targeted funding for SMEs</p> <p>offer technical assistance and training</p> <p>support free or low-cost digital tools</p>	<p>Public authorities</p> <p>establish standards and guidelines</p> <p>provide funding and incentives</p> <p>Technology providers and digital developers</p> <p>improve usability and accessibility</p> <p>provide technical support</p> <p>ensure cybersecurity and compliance</p> <p>FSC actors</p> <p>adopt and test technologies</p> <p>provide operational feedback</p> <p>share implementation experiences</p> <p>Research & academy</p> <p>evaluate tool performance</p> <p>develop methodologies</p> <p>support pilot projects</p> <p>assess behavioural and operational impacts</p>

Policy recommendation	Description	Main advantages	Main disadvantages	Cost & feasibility of implementation	Equity considerations	Stakeholders' responsibilities
<p>Foster effective partnerships within and across sectors to co-create FLW measurement, monitor and management tools</p>	<p>Aims to strengthen collaboration among stakeholders across the FSC to jointly develop FLW measurement, management and monitoring tools</p> <p>The approach promotes co-creation between food chain actors, researchers, technology providers, public authorities, and civil society organizations</p> <p>Improves the consistency, usability, and adoption of FLW data systems and prevention strategies by ensuring that tools are designed collaboratively and reflect operational realities across sectors</p>	<p>Improved quality and comparability of FLW data</p> <p>Greater innovation and technological development</p> <p>Stronger stakeholder engagement</p> <p>Enhanced circular economy opportunities</p>	<p>High coordination complexity</p> <p>Uneven participation and power imbalances</p> <p>Data-sharing and confidentiality concerns</p>	<p>Low to medium costs</p> <p>moderate public funding for national coordination programmes</p> <p>relatively low recurring costs for workshops, stakeholder forums, and others related</p> <p>Medium to high costs</p> <p>investment, administrative and operational costs.</p> <p>Feasibility</p> <p>low – households</p> <p>moderate – food services</p> <p>moderate to high – food industry.</p>	<p>Risks of inequity</p> <p>SMEs may lack financial and technical capacity to fully participate</p> <p>rural or less developed regions may have weaker digital infrastructure</p> <p>large corporations may dominate decision-making processes</p> <p>Mitigation measures</p> <p>provide targeted funding and technical assistance for SMEs</p> <p>support capacity-building in lower-resourced regions</p> <p>ensure inclusive governance structures</p> <p>involve consumers and community organisations in decision-making</p>	<p>Public authorities</p> <p>establish regulatory frameworks</p> <p>provide funding</p> <p>coordinate national programmes</p> <p>support harmonised standards</p> <p>Private sector actors</p> <p>develop and adopt monitoring systems</p> <p>share operational data</p> <p>invest in innovation</p> <p>participate in collaborative platforms</p> <p>Research & academy</p> <p>develop methodologies</p> <p>conduct impact assessments</p> <p>test digital tools</p> <p>support behavioural research</p> <p>Civil society & NGOs</p> <p>facilitate community engagement</p> <p>represent citizen interests</p> <p>promote equitable participation</p>

Policy recommendation	Description	Main advantages	Main disadvantages	Cost & feasibility of implementation	Equity considerations	Stakeholders' responsibilities
<p>Revise the regulatory framework to support FW categorisation reporting while ensuring privacy and data protection</p>	<p><i>Aims</i> to revise and strengthen the regulatory framework governing FW categorisation, reporting, and data sharing across the EU</p> <p><i>The approach</i> is to build trust among companies, researchers, and authorities while enabling more effective FW measurement, management and monitoring</p>	<p>Improved consistency and comparability of FW data</p> <p>Increased trust and willingness to share data</p> <p>Better monitoring of FW reduction targets</p> <p>Reduced legal uncertainty</p> <p>Strengthened cooperation across sectors and MS</p>	<p>Complex legal and administrative reform process</p> <p>Create increase of administrative burdens</p> <p>Potential conflicts with commercial confidentiality</p>	<p>Low to medium costs for the revision</p> <p>Medium to high costs if substantial public and private investment required</p> <p>Feasibility moderate – public authorities, food services and SMEs high – large retailers and food industry</p>	<p>Risks of inequity SMEs may face disproportionate compliance and legal costs smaller organisations may lack technical expertise in data governance complex legal requirements may discourage participation from smaller actors</p> <p>Mitigation measures provide simplified compliance pathways for SMEs offer financial and technical assistance provide public technical support services strengthen transparency in governance arrangements</p>	<p>European institutions revise the regulatory frameworks develop harmonised legal definitions coordinate EU-wide implementation</p> <p>National governments & authorities implement and enforce legislation oversee compliance provide guidance to businesses</p> <p>FSC actors comply with reporting obligations adopt harmonised categorisation standards</p> <p>Research & NGOs support methodological development facilitate stakeholder engagement monitor policy effectiveness promote transparency and trust-building.</p>

Policy recommendation	Description	Main advantages	Main disadvantages	Cost & feasibility of implementation	Equity considerations	Stakeholders' responsibilities
<p>Enhance alignment and coordination between EU-level initiatives and national regulatory frameworks</p>	<p><i>Aims</i> to improve coherence and coordination between EU-level FLW policies and the regulatory frameworks implemented at national, regional, and local levels across MS</p> <p><i>The approach</i> recognises that while harmonisation is important, MS also require flexibility to adapt EU objectives to local operational realities and sectoral conditions</p>	<p>Reduced regulatory fragmentation and complexity</p> <p>Improved implementation of FW reduction targets</p> <p>Greater stakeholder engagement and cooperation</p> <p>Increased flexibility and adaptability</p> <p>Facilitation of voluntary agreements and best-practice exchange</p>	<p>Coordination challenges across governance levels</p> <p>Risk of inconsistent implementation</p> <p>Administrative and resource burdens</p> <p>Potential delays in policy implementation</p>	<p>Low to medium costs</p> <p>Feasibility</p> <p>moderate – local authorities, food services and SMEs</p> <p>moderate to high – national authorities</p> <p>high – large retailers and food industry</p>	<p>Risks of inequity</p> <p>SMEs may have limited capacity to engage in consultations and voluntary agreements</p> <p>smaller MS or municipalities may lack administrative resources</p> <p>large corporations may exert disproportionate influence over policy design</p> <p>Mitigation measures</p> <p>provide targeted support for SMEs and local authorities</p> <p>offer technical assistance and capacity-building</p> <p>ensure balanced stakeholder representation in working groups</p> <p>create transparent consultation processes</p>	<p>European institutions</p> <p>coordinate policy alignment</p> <p>provide technical guidance</p> <p>support exchange of best practices</p> <p>National governments & authorities</p> <p>translate EU requirements into national frameworks</p> <p>coordinate national strategies</p> <p>establish stakeholder working groups</p> <p>Regional & local authorities</p> <p>adapt implementation to local conditions</p> <p>engage local stakeholders</p> <p>FSC actors</p> <p>participate in voluntary agreements,</p> <p>provide operational feedback</p> <p>contribute to working groups and consultations</p>

Policy recommendation	Description	Main advantages	Main disadvantages	Cost & feasibility of implementation	Equity considerations	Stakeholders' responsibilities
Engage stakeholders in FW quantification with incentives and perceived benefits	<p>Aims to increase stakeholder participation in FW measurement, management and monitoring by providing incentives and strengthening awareness of the economic, environmental, and reputational benefits of FW reduction</p> <p>The approach recognises that many stakeholders across the FSC may be reluctant to invest in FW measurement systems or prevention practices unless there are clear financial benefits, reduced compliance burdens, reputational advantages, market incentives and policy support mechanisms</p>	<p>Increased stakeholder participation and engagement</p> <p>Stronger motivation for FW reduction</p> <p>Accelerated adoption of innovative tools and practices</p> <p>Improved business reputation and market positioning</p> <p>Support for circular economy and food donation initiatives</p> <p>Enhanced policy acceptance and compliance</p>	<p>Financial costs for public authorities</p> <p>Risk of unequal access to incentives</p> <p>Potential for limited behavioural change</p> <p>Administrative complexity</p>	<p>Medium to high costs</p> <p>Feasibility moderate – households, SMEs and small operators moderate to high – food services high – food retail and large food industry</p>	<p>Risks of inequity SMEs may struggle to access funding and certification schemes. smaller food services may lack admin capacity rural or less developed regions may have limited access to financing and technical support Large corporations may benefit disproportionately from ESG-linked incentives and tax advantages</p> <p>Mitigation measures develop low-cost certification schemes. offer technical assistance and advisory services. ensure broad geographic accessibility of support programmes. support local and smaller operators in accessing ESG financing opportunities</p>	<p>European institutions support funding frameworks integrate FLW reduction into ESG and sustainability initiatives</p> <p>National governments & authorities design and administer incentive schemes provide tax reductions and subsidies establish certification systems coordinate national support programmes</p> <p>Financial institutions & investors facilitate access to loans and green financing support sustainable business investments.</p> <p>NGOs & certification bodies manage labels and certifications support awareness campaigns</p>

Policy recommendation	Description	Main advantages	Main disadvantages	Cost & feasibility of implementation	Equity considerations	Stakeholders' responsibilities
<p>Strengthen targeted training across the food sectors through accessible, user-oriented approaches that demonstrate clear ROI</p>	<p>Aims to strengthen education, training, and capacity-building activities across the food system to improve FLW measurement, management and monitoring, and prevention practices</p> <p>The approach recognises that although training requires upfront investment, it can generate long-term financial returns by improving operational efficiency, reducing avoidable waste, strengthening staff competencies, supporting compliance with regulatory requirements</p>	<p>Improved knowledge and technical capacity</p> <p>Reduction of FW and operational inefficiencies</p> <p>Positive financial return on investment</p> <p>Increased adoption of digital tools and innovation</p> <p>Improved regulatory compliance and preparedness</p> <p>Long-term cultural and behavioural change</p>	<p>Upfront financial and time costs</p> <p>Practical implementation challenges</p> <p>Uneven quality and effectiveness of training</p> <p>Difficulty in measuring impacts</p> <p>Risk of unequal access</p> <p>Limited integration into formal education systems</p>	<p>Low-to-medium cost</p> <p>online learning materials, awareness campaigns, webinars and workshops, training guidelines, vocational modules, train-the-trainer programmes</p> <p>Medium-to-high cost</p> <p>when programmes require continuous delivery and specialised expertise</p> <p>Feasibility</p> <p>moderate –SMEs and higher education institutions</p> <p>moderate to high – large food industry</p> <p>high – food retail and food services</p>	<p>Risks of inequity</p> <p>SMEs may lack financial and human resources for staff training</p> <p>smaller operators may struggle to release staff during working hours</p> <p>rural regions may have limited access to specialised training providers</p> <p>large corporations may benefit disproportionately from advanced training opportunities</p> <p>Mitigation measures</p> <p>provide subsidised or free training programmes for SMEs</p> <p>support flexible and online learning formats</p> <p>create simplified and practical training modules</p> <p>integrate FLW education into public education systems</p>	<p>European institutions</p> <p>support funding programmes</p> <p>promote training standards</p> <p>facilitate knowledge exchange</p> <p>National governments & education authorities</p> <p>integrate FLW topics into education systems</p> <p>support professional training programmes</p> <p>provide funding and incentives</p> <p>Universities & educational institutions</p> <p>develop curricula and training modules</p> <p>adapt training to sectoral needs</p> <p>support professional certification systems</p> <p>FSC actors</p> <p>integrate training into operational practices</p> <p>evaluate performance improvements</p>

Policy recommendation	Description	Main advantages	Main disadvantages	Cost & feasibility of implementation	Equity considerations	Stakeholders' responsibilities
<p>Create awareness campaigns integrating behavioural insights, measurable actions and cross-sector collaboration</p>	<p><i>Aims</i> to develop and implement FLW awareness campaigns that move beyond traditional information-based communication approaches</p> <p><i>The approach</i> recognises that awareness alone is often insufficient to change sustainable behaviour</p>	<p>Greater effectiveness in changing behaviour</p> <p>Improved reduction of household and consumer FW</p> <p>Stronger stakeholder collaboration</p> <p>Increased visibility of redistribution and valorisation initiatives</p> <p>Better monitoring and measurable outcomes</p> <p>Long-term cultural change</p>	<p>Behavioural change is complex and slow</p> <p>Campaign impacts may be difficult to measure</p> <p>Risk of limited engagement</p> <p>Coordination challenges across sectors</p> <p>Financial and operational costs</p> <p>Uneven effectiveness across demographic groups</p>	<p>Low-to-medium cost</p> <p>educational campaigns, behavioural nudges, social media communication, school programmes, public awareness materials, stakeholder workshops</p> <p>Medium-to-high cost</p> <p>when campaigns include infrastructure and technology components</p> <p>Feasibility</p> <p>moderate –SMEs and households</p> <p>moderate to high – schools and public institutions</p> <p>high – food retail and food services</p>	<p>Risks of inequity</p> <p>rural areas may have weaker access to redistribution infrastructure and separate waste collection systems</p> <p>campaigns may unintentionally target individual behaviour while overlooking structural barriers</p> <p>Mitigation measures</p> <p>support local community-based initiatives</p> <p>ensure affordability of practical tools</p> <p>tailor campaigns to different demographic groups</p> <p>address structural drivers of FW alongside individual behaviours</p> <p>integrate schools and public institutions to broaden outreach</p>	<p>National & local governments</p> <p>coordinate campaigns</p> <p>support infrastructure development</p> <p>implement separate waste collection systems</p> <p>FSC actors</p> <p>implement practical in-store and operational initiatives</p> <p>support redistribution programmes</p> <p>provide consumer information</p> <p>collaborate in behavioural interventions</p> <p>NGOs & community organisations</p> <p>support public engagement</p> <p>facilitate local campaigns</p> <p>Researchers & behavioural experts</p> <p>design evidence-based interventions</p> <p>evaluate campaign effectiveness</p> <p>analyse behavioural drivers</p>

Description of how the policy brief was developed

This policy brief was developed through a multi-step methodology combining evidence review, stakeholder input, and expert consultation. First, the common framework and key priority elements for harmonisation identified in WASTELESS D1.1 – White book for FLW reduction, measurement, and monitoring practices and WASTELESS D1.2 – Report on improved framework for FLW measurement & monitoring were used as a foundation, supported by a comprehensive literature review and expert surveys. This was complemented by insights from the WASTELESS case studies reported in D3.1 – Technical report of the tools and guidelines for vertical CS, including partial reports from each subtask, which enabled the analysis of existing challenges and the identification of potential recommendations. Finally, the findings and proposed recommendations were further refined through an expert consultation round table entitled “Policy recommendations for experts and policy makers, at national and European level based on WASTELESS results”, where detailed information can be found in WASTELESS D1.4 – CoP and replication at MS level and involving representatives from the FSC sector, FLW experts, and National and European policymakers.

Further important considerations

The implementation of these policy recommendations should not only assess reductions in FW volumes but also evaluate stakeholder participation, technological uptake, behavioural change, governance effectiveness, and equity outcomes. Strong coordination between EU institutions, MS, businesses, researchers, and civil society will be essential to ensure positive implementation of these policy recommendations supporting long-term FW reduction targets.

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Conflict of interest

The authors state that the policy brief was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be considered as a potential conflict of interest. Thus, the authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to this work.

Sources of evidence and key references

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Authors

Sofia F. Reis – sofia.reis@iseki-food.net – ISEKI-Food Association



Luminita Ciolacu – luminita.ciolacu@iseki-food.net – ISEKI-Food Association



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