

2.11 Food is never waste

Food is never waste - Interventions to deliver more circular food systems

What problem is your solution addressing?

Globally 1/3 of food is lost and wasted between farm and fork each year. It results in \$940 billion/y of economic losses across the supply chain. This amount consumes ¼ of the world's freshwater use by agriculture, occupies farmland area greater than the size of China, and emits ~8% of global greenhouse gases. A significant portion of these are GHG emissions from landfills caused by food waste decomposition. Food waste constitutes between 35-60% of landfilled material. Although SDG Target 12.3 calls for cutting food waste by 50% and reducing food loss by 2030, the world is not yet on track.

How does your solution address the problem?

This idea brings together proven policy interventions with new technologies to ensure no food is wasted. These interventions ensure food waste is measured and prevented, redistributed to those in need, or is used as a feedstock for processing into valuable products in line with principles of circularity. These interventions include:

- Mandatory segregation of food waste by businesses and households revealing the amount of food waste and facilitating separate collection for processing into added value products
- Incentives for food donation that ensure it is cheaper to donate food than to discard it
- Mandatory measurement of food waste by businesses showing businesses how much food they are wasting and focusing them on reducing FLW.
- Taxing or banning landfill and incineration of food waste
- Incentivizing the use of FLW as a feedstock for added value products such as new processed foods, animal feed, or fertilizer production.

These measures have not yet been combined in a single country. Together they will drive a less wasteful and more circular food system. We plan to advocate that Governments work with businesses, regulators and investors to implement these policies and build food repurposing infrastructure within 10 years, adapting them to local circumstances.

Is this a new solution or an existing solution that needs scaling?

Existing solution in need of scaling

Which organization/s, institution/s or group of individuals are associated with the solution?

WRAP, WRI, WWF, UNEP, UN Habitat, Climate and Clean Air Coalition

If selected as a game-changing solution, how will you leverage the UN Food Systems Summit to scale your solution?

This initiative will dramatically scale national efforts to reduce FLW through targeted interventions to reduce FLW and ensure all the surplus and waste is used productively. The interventions have not been brought together in a single economy yet and the UN Food System Summit is the perfect opportunity to encourage countries to adopt and adapt these interventions to fit local circumstances.

We will leverage the Summit by:

- Using national and city champions to describe the impact of these interventions
- Showcasing the added value and digital technologies that can be incentivized by these interventions
- Deploying international networks (e.g. the Global Foodbanking Network) to illustrate best practice in encouraging food donation
- Convening financial institutions to discuss financing the technologies across the world.
- Inviting donors to help finance the management and convening of the Initiative.

This idea would support the 50x50x30 initiative by providing incentives to help businesses and citizens to act.

Is this idea applicable to a particular geography, demography, landscape or other type of setting (e.g. high- or low-income countries, aquaculture)? If so, please specify.

By adapting the interventions to local circumstances, this approach could work in most countries around the world.

Who are the main actors that would put this action into place?

Policymakers (government), Private sector, and Consumers (individuals)

Source and process

- Richard Swannell, WRAP, WS3 member