

Food loss and waste



Food loss and waste is one of the 11 key interventions that are contributing to building climate resilience and low carbon emission in agriculture and food systems. Food is lost and wasted throughout the food value chain, from production to consumption. Food loss is defined as a reduction in edible mass (dry matter) or nutritional value (quality) of food intended for human consumption, which usually occur at production, post-harvest and processing stages of the food supply chain. While food waste refers to discarded food or removal of food from the food supply chain, which is fit for human consumption that usually happens at the retail and consumption level (Parfitt et al., 2010; FAO, 2018). Reducing food loss and waste is a key priority strategy to ensure sustainability, resilience, food security and nutrition in food systems. This has been recognized by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with its global target 12.3 on food loss and waste reduction.

Climate change and variability are adversely impacting the food value chain, including production, harvesting, transportation, storage, distribution, processing, retail and consumption. For instance, as the frequency and severity of extreme weather events increase, such as droughts, floods, storms, it may lead to substantial damage to crops as well as it may increase the outbreak of new pests and diseases, which may in turn drive more contamination and spoilage of foods.

| | Global and national level indicators | Name of framework /initiative /study | Subnational and local level indicators | Name of framework /initiative /study |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Amount of food losses and waste | Food loss index; food waste index [global indicator, which can be disaggregated at the national level] Food loss index -> covers postharvest losses until the retail level of 10 key commodities set by the countries Food waste index -> covers food waste at the retail and consumption level | SDG 12.3.1 (a) & (b) | Waste generated by household – estimated tonnage arising of food waste [Decrease in] Annual volume and proportion of total food waste produced by households in the city region [Decrease in] Total volume, economic value and percentage of food lost & wasted along the food chain in the city region | DEFRA (2013) FAO/RUAF Foundation/Wilfrid Laurier University (2018) FAO/RUAF Foundation/Wilfrid Laurier University (2018) |