



New Circular Economy Action Plan FEBA Consultation on the Roadmap

Brussels, 20 January 2020

In the European Union approximately around 88 million tons of food waste are generated annually with associated costs estimated at 143 billion EUR¹. At the same time, around 110 million people were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2018 and 36 million people were not able to afford a quality meal every second day². Food redistribution, which is the best destination when surplus food occurs, since it ensures the highest value use of edible food resources, is proven to be the most effective approach not only to contribute to food insecurity and manage surplus food but especially for preventing food losses and waste (FLW) at source and shifting from a linear to a circular economy.

Considering the significant amount of food waste generated in Europe and its consequences on the environment, on economy, and on society, in 2015 the [European Food Banks Federation](#) (FEBA) welcomed the communication “[Closing the loop – An EU action plan for the Circular Economy](#)”, especially the section dedicated to food waste. As underlined, in addition to environmental and financial impacts, “food waste also has an important social angle: donation of food that is still edible but that for logistic or marketing reasons cannot be commercialized should be facilitated”. Moreover, it is worth recalling that in September 2015, as part of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a target of halving per capita food waste at the retail and consumer level and reducing food losses along production and supply chains. The EU and its Member States are committed to meeting this target.

Furthermore, another important topic to underline when considering food waste is the difficulty to quantify it: today, there is no harmonized and reliable methodology to measure food waste in the EU, which makes it more difficult for public authorities to assess its scale, origins, and trends over time. Addressing the measurement issue is an important step towards a better understanding of the problem, a coherent monitoring and reporting as well as effective exchange of good practices across the EU in order to achieve the goals.

In order to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) [Target 12.3](#) on food loss and waste and maximize the contribution of all actors, as declared in the 2015

¹ Estimates of European food waste levels’ – FUSIONS, March 2016

² Eurostat, 2018



Circular Economy Action Plan, in 2016 the European Commission established the [EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste](#), a multi-stakeholder platform dedicated to food loss and waste prevention. In this context and as part of the 2015 Circular Economy Action Plan, in 2017 the European Commission adopted the [EU food donation guidelines](#) in order to facilitate the recovery and redistribution of safe, edible food to those in need. Developed in consultation with the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste, the EU food donation guidelines seek to facilitate compliance of providers and recipients of surplus food with relevant requirements laid down in the EU regulatory framework and promote common interpretation by regulatory authorities in the EU Member States of the EU rules applying to the redistribution of surplus food. Finally, on 12 December 2019, the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste published the “[Key recommendations for action of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste](#)” developed through a wide consultation process involving all of its members. They address actions required at each stage of the food supply chain (including food redistribution) and involving all key players from the public and private sectors.

Considering the impact that food waste has in Europe and the relevant results achieved so far mainly thanks to the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste, the New Circular Economy Action Plan should build on existing achievements and focus on this topic when considering the *reduction of waste generation* and the *modernization of certain waste laws* to better contribute to the shift from a linear to a circular economy. As demonstrated, food waste prevention is widely applicable along the agri-food value chain and can invigorate the efficiency and effectiveness of food business operators.

The European Food Banks Federation expects a renewed commitment at European level towards food waste prevention in the New Circular Economy Action Plan to contribute more to increasing the circularity of the EU's economy, preserving its natural environment and supporting the contribution of the EU's industry to achieve a climate-neutral continent. It is evident that a transition to a circular economy system, especially as regards food, is one of the biggest and profound challenges of our time with the final goal to reduce emissions and environmental impact, create business opportunities and alleviate food insecurity in Europe.



About FEBA

The European Food Banks Federation (FEBA) is a European umbrella non-profit organization and works in collaboration with 24 Members and 5 Associate Members in European countries. For more than 30 years, FEBA mission has consisted in representing its membership at European and international level, supporting and strengthening food banks in Europe by providing training, sharing best practice and knowledge, and developing partnerships, and fostering the creation of new Food Banks.

FEBA brings together 421 Food Banks and branches which are committed to fight against food waste and to feed the most deprived. Our members provide 4.3 million meals each day to 9.3 million most deprived people through 45,700 charitable organizations thanks to the professionalism of 31,700 co-workers (85% volunteers). In addition to surplus food from the food supply chain, FEBA members also redistribute food from the Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived (FEAD) and the Fruits and Vegetables withdrawal scheme, as well as from individual donations.

