



**United Nations
Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment
Programme**

Distr.: General
4 August 2016

Original: English

**United Nations Environment Assembly of the
United Nations Environment Programme**
Second session
Nairobi, 23–27 May 2016

2/9. Prevention, reduction and reuse of food waste

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

Concerned that roughly one third of food produced globally for human consumption is wasted or lost, as is the vast quantity of scarce resources such as land, energy and water that are used to produce food that is later lost or wasted,

Recognizing the negative environmental, social and economic impact of food that is lost or wasted, including the vast quantities of scarce resources – such as land, energy, and water – that are used to produce and transport food that is later lost or wasted, and that food waste enters often over-burdened waste management systems,

Recognizing also the international community’s fundamental priority of achieving food security and nutrition and ending hunger caused inter alia by the adverse environmental effects of climate change and desertification,

Recognizing further that in developing countries food waste and losses occur mainly, but not exclusively, at early stages of the food value chain,

Recognizing the waste management hierarchy, which addresses both organic and inorganic components of solid waste, and prioritizes in rank order prevention, minimization, reuse, recycling and other recovery, including energy recovery, and final disposal,

Recognizing also that effective management of food waste would prioritize source reduction to reduce volume by prevention and minimization of food lost and wasted, reuse of safe and nutritious food suitable for human consumption that otherwise might be wasted, recovery of lost and wasted food residues for animal feed, where safe to do so, and diversion of food loss and waste from landfill disposal to beneficial use in industry, including energy recovery,

Recognizing further the role that market-based incentives may play in reducing food loss and waste, taking into account differing national circumstances,

Noting the particular roles and opportunities of relevant governmental institutions, including environment ministries, national institutions with environmental responsibilities, international organizations, agricultural ministries and other relevant ministries and their partners with responsibility for food security, in contributing to solving food loss and waste problems, with their particular orientation towards addressing socioeconomic, environmental and public health problems, while promoting sustainable-development-oriented solutions and opportunities,

Recognizing with appreciation the work of the United Nations Environment Programme to raise awareness of this important matter through the joint “Think.Eat.Save” initiative of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the

United Nations, as well as the recent launch of the Sustainable Food Systems Programme under the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, which was developed through a strategic partnership between the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization,

Welcoming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes, inter alia, Sustainable Development Goal target 12.3 to halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels by 2030 and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses, and recognizing the positive impact that target 12.3 can have on the achievement of other Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 2,

1. *Invites* Governments, taking into account differing national circumstances:

(a) To implement programmes including, when appropriate, market-based incentives that reduce the amount of food lost and wasted, and to promote at all stages of the food value chain reuse of edible food that might otherwise be wasted in order to increase the amount of nutritious and healthy food available for human consumption, especially to the most food- and nutritionally insecure populations, and to reduce the amount of usable food that is disposed of as waste;

(b) To work cooperatively with international organizations and institutions, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other interested stakeholders to develop programmes to prevent and reduce food loss and waste along the whole food value chain and promote the environmentally sound management of food loss and waste, including the inedible parts of food, for uses such as animal feed, where safe to do so, and subject to prevailing health regulations, industrial applications, composting and energy production, while respecting the waste management hierarchy;

(c) To participate in existing international efforts regarding improved methodologies to better measure food loss and waste generation and the socioeconomic and environmental benefits of achieving efficient and sustainable food systems;

(d) To engage in international cooperation with the objective of reducing and/or eradicating food loss resulting from contamination at the production stage by sharing technical knowledge and good practices that have proven to be effective in this regard and that contribute to the sustainable use of natural resources;

2. *Requests* the Executive Director to, within available resources and in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other relevant international organizations:

(a) Support the development of multi-stakeholder initiatives that focus on food waste reduction and prevention along the whole food value chain, including contamination at the production stage, food reuse, and diversion of food loss and waste from landfill disposal to other productive uses, making full use of existing partnership programmes related to food waste, and collaborate with other international organizations and institutions – for example, through the “Think.Eat.Save” initiative – as well as with the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other interested stakeholders such as those involved in the recently launched Sustainable Food Systems Programme of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns;

(b) Enhance cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme and other relevant United Nations agencies, with the purpose of supporting communities of practice that focus on food loss and waste reduction;

(c) Continue to participate in ongoing international initiatives to improve the measurement of food loss and waste, including those aimed at quantifying the socioeconomic and environmental benefits;

(d) Strengthen efforts, such as those being made by the International Environmental Technology Centre, to disseminate information on waste management in forums such as the Sustainable Food Systems Programme of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, including information on the technologies available to prevent food loss and enable the reuse of food waste as a productive economic resource, and explore opportunities to collaborate with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization to expand use of the products of food loss and waste as feedstock for biogas generation and composting;

(e) Continue to raise awareness of the environmental dimensions of the problem of food waste, and of potential solutions and good practices for preventing and reducing food waste and promoting food reuse and environmentally sound management of food waste, and to identify regional and subregional hubs of expertise, including by engaging the regional offices of the United Nations Environment Programme to advance these objectives;

(f) Report to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its next session on progress made in implementing the relevant provisions of the present resolution.

*6th plenary meeting
27 May 2016*
