

FIRST EU-WIDE FOOD WASTE REDUCTION TARGETS IN SIGHT, IN NEW LEGAL UPDATE

Brussels, 26 March

This month the European Parliament approved a compromise with the European Council on the [revision of the Waste Framework Directive](#), to include the first-ever binding targets on food waste reduction across the EU. They will apply nationally by the end of 2030, based on the figures for each Member State in 2020. Although the targets themselves constitute a significant step towards food loss and waste reduction, SAFE believes they lack the necessary ambition.

If the proposal is adopted in its current form, it would entail a 10% reduction of food waste in food processing and manufacturing, down from at least 20% requested by the European Parliament. For retail, food distribution, restaurants, food services, and households, the expected reduction would be 30% compared to 2020, calculated per capita. The initial target of the European Parliament for this category was 40%. We regret the lowering of the level of ambition.

All partners from the SISTERS consortium, including SAFE, had previously called for stronger targets to address the food waste crisis. SISTERS is a project gathering 18 organisations from 8 countries, aimed at reducing food loss and food waste in the different stages of the Food Value Chain.

Another disappointing aspect is that primary production is entirely excluded from these targets. This can undermine the effectiveness of the legislation, leaving small family farms at a disadvantage compared to bigger actors, who could potentially avoid any requirements on food waste reduction.

Currently the amount of food wasted in the EU is higher than Europe's food imports.

On the positive side, the targets will be reviewed mid-term, opening the possibility for increased ambition, if meeting the initial targets proves easier than expected. There is also the possibility to extend them beyond 2030, when a new assessment will have to be made. The Commission should evaluate if higher targets (30% and 50% respectively) should be introduced for 2035.

All countries will have to report on their campaigns, actions, and outcomes to the European Environment Agency and the reporting methods will be harmonised, to improve the efficiency of the system.

In addition, Member States will have to designate authorities in charge of specific national programmes.

The current compromise still will need to be voted in a plenary session of the European Parliament, but no changes are expected. It has taken 8 months to bridge the differences between the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the Member States.

Reducing food waste is essential to fight climate change, since it accounts for approximately 16% of all the greenhouse gases from the EU's food system. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the production and transportation of food that is later wasted accounts for 8% of global greenhouse emissions.