



Food Waste Index Report 2021: UNEP

Why in News

Recently, the [United Nations Environment Programme \(UNEP\)](#) released the **Food Waste Index Report 2021**.

- It has revealed that **17% of all food available at consumer level** (11% in households, 5% in food service and 2% in retail) **was wasted** in 2019 and around 690 million people had to go hungry.

Key Points

▪ About the Report:

- It presents the most comprehensive **food waste data collection, analysis and modelling to date**, generating a new estimate of **global food waste**.
- It also **publishes** a methodology for countries to measure food waste, at household, food service and retail level, to track national progress towards 2030.
- In contrast to the **Food Loss Index**, the Food Waste Index measures total food waste (rather than loss or waste associated with specific commodities).

▪ Findings:

◦ Food Wastage:

- This report estimates that around **931 million tonnes of food waste** was generated in 2019.
- 61% of which came from households, 26% from food service and 13% from retail.

◦ Wastages Across All Income Groups:

- Food waste generation is found to be equally relevant across all income countries such as high, upper-middle and lower-middle income countries.
- Developed Countries like **Austria** produce very low amounts of waste at 39 kg/capita/year. On the other hand, countries like **Nigeria** are producing waste at 189 kg/capita/year. For **India**, the waste in kg/capita/year was 50.
- This diverges from earlier narratives concentrating **consumer food waste in developed countries**, and **food production, storage and transportation losses in developing countries**.

◦ Lack of Data Availability:

- Global food waste data availability is currently low, and measurement approaches have been highly variable.

▪ Significance of Reduction of Food Waste:

- **Reduce Hunger:** Reducing food waste can slow the destruction of nature through land conversion and pollution, enhance the availability of food and thus reduce hunger and save money at a time of global recession.

- **Aligned with SDGs:** This Food Waste Index Report aims to advance progress on **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 12.3)**, i.e. “By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses”.
- **Tackle GHG Emissions:** About 8-10% of global greenhouse gas emissions are associated with food that is not consumed. Thus, tackling food wastage issues can further achieve **Paris Agreement** targets.
- **Suggestions by the Report:**
 - **Enhancing NDCs (Nationally Determined Contributions) for Food Systems:** To raise ambition in national climate strategies by integrating food loss and waste, and strengthen food security.
 - Co-create and adopt game-changing solutions to food waste through the **UN Food Systems Summit**.
 - **Regional Food Waste Working Group:** These Working Groups will provide capacity building and training to participating Member States in measuring food waste, developing a national baseline and designing national strategies for food waste prevention.

UN Food Systems Summit

- In 2021, UN Secretary-General António Guterres will convene a Food Systems Summit as part of the **Decade of Action** to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.
- The Summit will launch bold new actions to deliver progress on all 17 SDGs, each of which relies to some degree on healthier, more sustainable and equitable food systems.

Food Loss Index

- The Food Loss Index (FLI) **focuses on food losses** that occur from **production up to (and not including) the retail level**.
- It measures the changes in percentage losses for a basket of 10 main commodities by country in comparison with a base period.
- The FLI contributes to measure progress towards **SDG Target 12.3**.

[Source:DTE](#)

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