



Practice Abstract #1: Analysis of the new Directive on waste: opportunities and limitations



WASTEWISE
Waste Avoidance Strategies for
Environmental Sustainability

The recent Directive (EU) 2025/1892, amending Directive 2008/98/EC on waste, introduces binding food waste (FW) reduction targets for 2030 and represents a significant step in strengthening the EU's commitment to resource efficiency.

A major opportunity lies in the obligation for each Member State (MS) to develop a National Plan for Food Waste Prevention and Reduction, which is expected to enhance coordination across ministries and agencies. Stronger enforcement mechanisms - including possible sanctions - could improve data quality; however, these mechanisms remain sensitive, as they may incentivize formal compliance even where structural constraints, such as limited funding, fragmented governance, or data gaps (often reflecting underlying structural issues), limit their ability to reduce FW.

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Important structural constraints persist. WASTEWISE interviews (18) with national reference personnel show that improvements in data collection often increase reported FW quantities, as fractions and sectors previously unaccounted for become visible. This complicates short-term assessments of progress. Financial resources allocated to FW monitoring vary considerably across countries, from stable research budgets to cases with no dedicated funding, directly affecting methodological robustness. Although policies to reduce food waste exist, they remain fragmented and are often insufficiently monitored in terms of their impacts.

The WASTEWISE consortium warmly welcomes the introduction of binding targets. Nevertheless, we observe that several MS may not yet be fully prepared to ensure consistent monitoring and robust, transparent reporting. In this context, the introduction of sanctions may be premature. We therefore encourage the European Commission to offer clearer guidance to MS by updating the Delegated Decision with a more detailed methodological protocol.

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