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### **Joint declaration against food waste**

We, academics and researchers from universities in different countries around the world, Members of the European Parliament, politicians and representatives of international organizations and the civil society, have gathered today, the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 2010, at the European Parliament in Brussels to take common action in the prevention and reduction of food waste on a global and European scale.

The amount of wasted food is alarming. An estimated 50% of the food produced is lost, converted and wasted with considerable variations between countries and seasons (Lundqvist: 2010).

If all the world had the same voracity as Europeans, it would take three planets to produce the amount of food demanded (FAO and Stockholm Environmental Institute). In Britain every year 18 million tonnes of food still perfectly edible are thrown away (WRAP) by households alone for an annual retail value cost of 14 billion pounds: at the same time 4 million people in the UK do not have access to a healthy diet.

In Sweden, an average household is estimated to throw away 25% of food purchased. In Italy, about 20.290.767 tonnes of food waste are formed every year along the whole supply chain. Danish people's households yearly food waste is equivalent to 2.93 billion US Dollars (2.15 billion Euro). An average Danish family with 2 adults and 2 children wastes food for 1.872 US Dollars (1.341 Euro) a year. (Danish Agriculture & Food Council -2010).

A recent report published by ADEME (French Environment and Energy Management Agency) states that each French citizen throws away every year 7 kilos of food still in the original package. In the same country, 8 million people are at risk of poverty.

A study by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases has demonstrated that 40% of food produced in the United States is thrown away along the whole food supply chain.

Apart from the waste in the food supply chain, overeating is gradually becoming a serious public health issue in a growing number of countries.

According to a U.S. study of PLoS One, U.S. and Western countries are consuming every day a surplus of 1400 calories per person for a total of 150 trillion calories a year.

We are therefore deeply alarmed by the amount of waste of various kinds in the world and at the same time by the growing number of hungry people (about 1 billion on the planet). We are at a critical junction in human and environmental history; resource scarcity and degradation of livelihood systems cause grave concern and food insecurity is a major challenge.

Food waste has significant environmental, socio-economic and health impacts.

It accounts for more than one quarter of the total consumptive use of finite and vulnerable freshwater and more than 300 million barrels of oil per year, according to a recently released study (*The Progressive Increase of Food Waste in America and Its Environmental Impact* by Kevin D. Hall, Juen Guo, Michael Dore, Carson C. Chow).

Each tonne of food waste generates 4.2 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> (although there are differences between vegetarian and animal food items).

If we stop wasting food it would be like taking 1 in 4 cars off the road in the UK. (LoveFoodHateWaste.com:2008)

1. In adopting this declaration we intend to make explicit our commitment at national, regional and global levels to reduce by 50%

the amount of food waste throughout the food chain. We call on all stakeholders involved in the food chain (from farm to fork, i.e. farmers, distribution, marketing system and consumers) to mobilize to make this goal achievable.

2. We advocate that the reduction of 50% of food waste at the global level becomes an essential element of all national food, agricultural and social policies, both in developed and in developing countries. Steps should urgently be taken to identify what actions should be embraced to make such an objective a realistic goal to be achieved by 2025.

3. Starting from the institutions originally involved in this declaration, we aim at creating a Global Partnership against Food Waste that expands its reach and involves more and more stakeholders and community members. The Global Partnership against Food Waste will commit itself to the sharing of technologies, processes, projects and ideas for increasing the capacity of global, European, national and regional institutions and governments to find solutions to food waste.

4. We call on the United Nations to include the fight against food waste as an additional target within Goal 7 (“Ensure environmental sustainability”) and so that food waste reduction is achieved in a coordinated and agreed way and through intermediate stages.

5. International institutions have stressed on many occasions the urgent need to assist developing countries and emerging economies in expanding their agricultural and food production for instance through increasing investments, both public and private, in agriculture, the agro-business and rural development. In addition to increasing agricultural production, it is essential to facilitate that as much as feasible of the produce reaches various consumers, i.e. that the efficiency in the supply chain is enhanced.

In total agreement with the final declaration of the Ministers of Agriculture of the G8 countries in 2009 on "Agriculture, food security and the International Agenda", we call therefore for increased support, including investment in science and research, technology, education, dissemination and innovation in agriculture, in the distribution and supply chain and among consumers to reduce food waste.

During the World Food Summit in 2009 it was decided to increase agricultural/food production by 70% till 2050 – a tremendous increase- but there was no discussion nor any decisions about an

alternative/supplementary approach, i.e. to make the supply chain more efficient and thus to reduce waste. It is time to reassess the conventional lavish attitude to our scarce resources and the forgiving attitude to equally lavish consumption/waste behaviour.

6. We urge national governments and organisations such as the Food Standards Agency to develop practical solutions and improved communication to make it easier for consumers to get the most from the food they buy and learn how to waste less of it.

We urge the promotion of transparency in labels as well as more appropriate packaging solutions as to enable consumers to get the last remaining food out of the packaging.

We ask politicians, public institutions, authorities and the media to continuously inform the public about food waste issues through public awareness and education campaigns.

We urge the European Union to engage in the rise and spread of ecological intelligence. Ecological intelligence refers to the capacity of understanding how every action impacts on the environment and the ecosystems. This is a vital step in an effort to do less harm to our life support system and to live in a sustainable way. This can be achieved through legislation and raising public awareness. It is hoped that the European citizens, instilled with a renewed and participatory environmental awareness, will help to achieve this goal.

7. We urge the European Commission to take a position on food waste and we request that the fight against food waste becomes one of the priority items on the agenda for the European Commission.

Having regard to Articles 191 and 192 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which aim to promote a high level of protection for human health and the environment, we urge the European Commission to review the existing legislation applicable to waste with a view to drawing up a proposal for a specific directive by the end of 2015. We call on the Commission to provide quantification under the National Emissions Plan of the CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent reductions and reductions in water foot prints obtained from recycling and composting and to support the Member States in introducing binding and ambitious targets for the recycling of food waste.

Promoters of the Declaration against Food Waste:

1. Andrea Segrè- Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Bologna, Italy and Chair of Last Minute Market
2. Silvia Gaiani- Senior Researcher, Department of Agricultural Economics, Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Bologna, Italy
3. Luca Falasconi- Senior Researcher, Department of Agricultural Economics, Faculty of Agriculture of the University of Bologna, Italy and partner Last Minute Market
4. Guillaume Bapst- co-founder of ANDES - National Association of solidarity grocery stores, (France)
5. Tory Coates - FoodCycle (UK)
6. Paul Connett, Professor Emeritus in Environmental Chemistry, St. Lawrence University, New York (USA) and Director of the American Environmental Health Studies Project (AEHSP).
7. Jan Lundqvist- Professor, Senior Scientific Advisor, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)
8. Selina Juul- Selina Juul, Founder of Stop Wasting Food movement Denmark (Stop Spild Af Mad)
9. Claudio Pagliara- RAI correspondent from Jerusalem (Israel)

## References

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<http://www.fao.org/wsfs/world-summit/en/>

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