



Reduction of Food Loss and Waste

Conference



In the Encyclical “Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home,” Pope Francis calls for changes to “the trajectory and functioning of the world economy”, as the current economic model is leading to “the destruction of the environment due to apathy, the reckless pursuit of profit, excessive faith in technology and political shortsightedness.” He explains that the pursuit of this economic model has resulted in a “throwaway culture” in which unwanted items and unwanted people—such as the elderly, the poor, and the disabled—are discarded as waste and where we continue to “hurt and mistreat our home.”

Key objectives

The key objectives of the conference are to: (1) share the latest scientific evidence on how to reduce food loss and waste (FLW) and thereby contribute to global food security; and (2) provide recommendations for expanded global and national action by citizens, corporations, governments, and international organizations, and (3) broaden the alliance of actors for more significant impact.

Background

Reducing the amount of nutritious food that is being either lost or wasted is a global priority, enshrined in Target 3 of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12. Besides the SDGs, the conference is motivated by the Encyclical “Laudato Si” where Pope Francis calls for changes to overcome the “throwaway culture.” Achieving the SDG target requires comprehensive and sustained actions that tackle this problem’s social, economic, and environmental causes and

consequences. It requires approaches that: (1) foster education, (2) create awareness, (3) promote dialogue, and (4) stimulate global action through creation of incentives to strengthen the business case to tackle food loss and waste and move to more sustainable consumption.

Design and outcomes of the proposed Vatican Conference

We note that many good actions to reduce FLW are already in place in many countries, but so far they do not add up to global impact and joint learning. Further, the most promising actions can be enhanced. By bringing together a group of leaders actively engaged with this issue from academia, religious communities, private sector, government, civil society, and the United Nations (UN), we aim to create an interdisciplinary space for analysis of knowledge and potential solutions, and for commitment to action to further promote the achievement of the SDG 12.3 FLW target. This shall contribute to improve the wellbeing of the global population

The intended outcomes of the conference are:

- A statement that calls for joint public policy and private sector action to set priorities at the global, regional, country, and corporate level; increase, align, and coordinate investments; and commit to measure and report on FLW metrics;
- A coordinated communication effort to raise the profile of the FLW issue in the media and mobilize civil society and the Churches and faith communities to embed FLW reduction efforts with their followers; and
- An action plan and key commitments to address existing knowledge gaps and promote practical solutions and investments for the realization of SDG target 12.3.