



Food Waste Index Report 2024

For Prelims: Food Waste Index Report 2024, [United Nations Environment Programme \(UNEP\)](#), [Public Private Partnerships \(PPP\)](#), [Sustainable Development Goal \(SDG\) 12.3](#).

For Mains: Food Waste Index Report 2024, Food Loss & Waste: Current Scenario, Reasons, Initiatives Taken.

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the **Food Waste Index Report 2024**, was released jointly by the [United Nations Environment Programme \(UNEP\)](#) and **WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme)**, a UK based non-profit organisation, stressed the importance of expanding and strengthening data infrastructure to enable the tracking and monitoring of food waste.

- WRAP is a climate action NGO working around the globe to tackle the causes of the climate crisis and give the planet a sustainable future.
- The report defines **“food waste”** as **“food and the associated inedible parts removed from the human food supply chain”**.
- **Food Loss** is defined as **“all the crop and livestock human-edible commodity quantities that, directly or indirectly, completely exit the post-harvest/slaughter production/supply chain up to, and excluding, the retail level”**.

Note:

The Food Waste Index Report is tracking **country-level progress to halve food waste by 2030** ([SDG 12.3](#)). SDG 12 aims to ensure **sustainable consumption and production patterns**.

- First published in 2021, the current report builds on **recent and greater datasets and provides an update** on the scale of food wasted worldwide, as well as a focus on multi-stakeholder collaboration through [Public Private Partnerships \(PPP\)](#) as a solution.

What are the Key Highlights of the Report?

- **Magnitude of Food Waste:**
 - In 2022, the world wasted 1.05 billion tonnes of food, **amounting to one fifth (19%) of food available to consumers being wasted**, at the retail, food service, and household level.
 - That is in addition to the 13% of the world’s food lost in the supply chain, as estimated by [FAO \(Food and Agricultural Organization\)](#), from post-harvest up to and excluding

retail.

- **Food Waste and GreenHouse Gas Emission:**
 - Food loss and waste generates 8-10% of [Global Greenhouse Gas \(GHG\)](#) emissions – almost **five times the total emissions from the aviation sector**.
 - It occurs while **a third of humanity faces food insecurity**.
- **Lower Disparity in Food Waste:**
 - Since the release of the [2021 Food Waste Index Report](#), there has been a significant expansion in data coverage, resulting in a notable reduction in disparities in average per capita household food waste.
 - Across high-income, upper-middle income, and lower-middle income countries, the observed average levels of household **food waste differ by just 7 kg per capita per year**.
- **Temperature and Food Waste Correlation:**
 - Hotter countries appear to have **more food waste per capita** in households, potentially due to **increased consumption of fresh foods** with substantial inedible parts and lack of robust cold chain.
 - Higher seasonal temperatures, extreme heat events, and droughts make it more challenging to **store, process, transport**, and sell food safely, often leading to a significant volume of food being wasted or lost.
- **Urban-Rural Disparities:**
 - Middle-income countries display variations between urban and rural populations, with **rural areas generally wasting less**.
 - Possible explanations include greater **diversion of food scraps to pets, animal feed, and home composting in rural areas**.
- **Lack Adequate System to Track Progress:**
 - Many low- and middle-income countries continue to **lack adequate systems for tracking progress** to meet Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 of halving food waste by 2030, particularly in retail and food services.
 - At present, **only four G-20 countries** (Australia, Japan, UK, US) and the [European Union](#) have food waste estimates suitable for tracking progress to 2030.
- **Data Variance and Subnational Estimates:**
 - Countries like India, Indonesia, and South Korea **have only subnational estimates regarding food waste**, highlighting a gap in comprehensive national data.
 - The report suggests that this variance necessitates more inclusive studies to capture a clearer picture of the food waste landscape.

What are the Key Recommendations of the Food Waste Index Report 2024?

- **Engagement of G20 Countries:**
 - Encourage G20 countries to take a leading role in international cooperation and policy development to achieve **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12.3**, leveraging their influence on global consumer trends to promote awareness and education about food waste domestically and internationally.
- **Promotion of Public Private Partnerships:**
 - Encourage the embrace of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) to reduce food waste and its impacts on climate and water stress, bringing together governments, regional and industry groups to collaborate and deliver a shared goal through a **Target-Measure-Act approach**.
- **Utilisation of the Food Waste Index:**
 - Advocate for countries to **use the Food Waste Index to consistently measure** food waste, develop robust national baselines, and track progress towards SDG 12.3. This includes **addressing the lack of comprehensive food waste data** collection, especially in the retail and food service sectors.
- **Conducting Representative National Food Waste Studies:**
 - Highlight the necessity for representative national food waste studies in key countries such as **India, China, South Africa, Indonesia, and Mexico** to address the variance in data and effectively tackle food waste at both individual and systemic levels.
- **Collaborative Efforts Across Sectors:**
 - There is a need to urge governments, cities, food businesses, researchers to collaborate in

efforts to reduce food waste, emphasising the importance of accurate measurement, innovative solutions, and collective action to achieve SDG 12.3 by halving global food waste by 2030.

What are the Key Efforts Related to Food Loss and Waste?

▪ Constitutional Provision:

- Though the Indian Constitution does not have any explicit provision regarding the right to food, the fundamental right to **life enshrined in Article 21 of the Constitution** can be interpreted to include the right to live with human dignity, which may include the right to food and other basic necessities.

▪ Buffer Stock:

- **Food Corporation of India (FCI)** has the prime responsibility of procuring the food grains at **minimum support price (MSP)** and stored in its warehouses at different locations and from there it is supplied to the state governments in terms of requirement.

▪ National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA):

- It marks a paradigm shift in the approach to food security from welfare to rights-based approach.
- **NFSA covers 75%** of the rural population and 50% of the urban population under:
 - **Antyodaya Anna Yojana:** It constitutes the poorest-of-the-poor, who are entitled to receive 35 kg of foodgrains per household per month.
 - **Priority Households (PHH):** Households covered under PHH category are entitled to receive 5 kg of foodgrains per person per month.

Drishti Mains Question:

Q: Despite facing hunger issues, World wastes a significant portion of its food. Analyse the causes of food wastage across the supply chain and suggest workable solutions for a more sustainable food system.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year's Question (PYQs)

Prelims

Q. With reference to the provisions made under the National Food Security Act, 2013, consider the following statements: (2018)

1. The families coming under the category of 'below poverty line (BPL)' only are eligible to receive subsidised food grains.
2. The eldest woman in a household, of age 18 years or above, shall be the head of the household for the purpose of issuance of a ration card.
3. Pregnant women and lactating mothers are entitled to a 'take-home ration' of 1600 calories per day during pregnancy and for six months thereafter.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 3 only

Ans: (b)

Mains

Q. What are the salient features of the National Food Security Act, 2013? How has the Food Security Bill

helped in eliminating hunger and malnutrition in India? (2021)

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/food-waste-index-report-2024>

