

European Food Sustainable Consumption and Production Round Table

Activities of Working Group 2

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A lack of harmonised tools for practical environmental assessment and to support consumer communication

- **Today: no uniformly applied assessment methodology** for food, apart from conducting standardised LCAs, which are too complex and too expensive for daily industrial practice
- **High diversity of food and drinks**, different environmental impacts at different stages of the life-cycle (e.g. sugar vs. milk vs. pizza)
- Specificities in terms of **health and nutrition** must be considered
- **Proliferation of competing schemes** developed by various actors within the EU (public authorities, retailers, producers)
- Different methods **assessing different impacts with different methodologies** (carbon footprint, water footprint, CO2 content of packaging, recyclability, air-freight, organic, etc)
- Communication tools supported by different schemes which **reduces consumer understanding** and **comparability**.





Sustainable confusion?





Key characteristics

- Official launch:** 6 May 2009 in Brussels
- Vision:** Promote science-based, coherent approach to SCP in the food sector, consider interactions across the entire food chain
- Working areas:** Methodology, communication, continuous improvement
- Scope:** Food and drink products across the whole life-cycle
- Food actors:** 23 European food chain organisations
- Other members:** Sustainability Consortium, World Resources Institute
- Co-chairs:** European Commission (DGs ENV, SANCO, JRC, ENTR)
- Support:** UNEP, European Environment Agency
- Observers:** National governments, Eurogroup for Animals, UN FAO, UNDP, Spanish Consumers Union (OCU)
- Participation:** EU level organisations subject to expertise and commitment





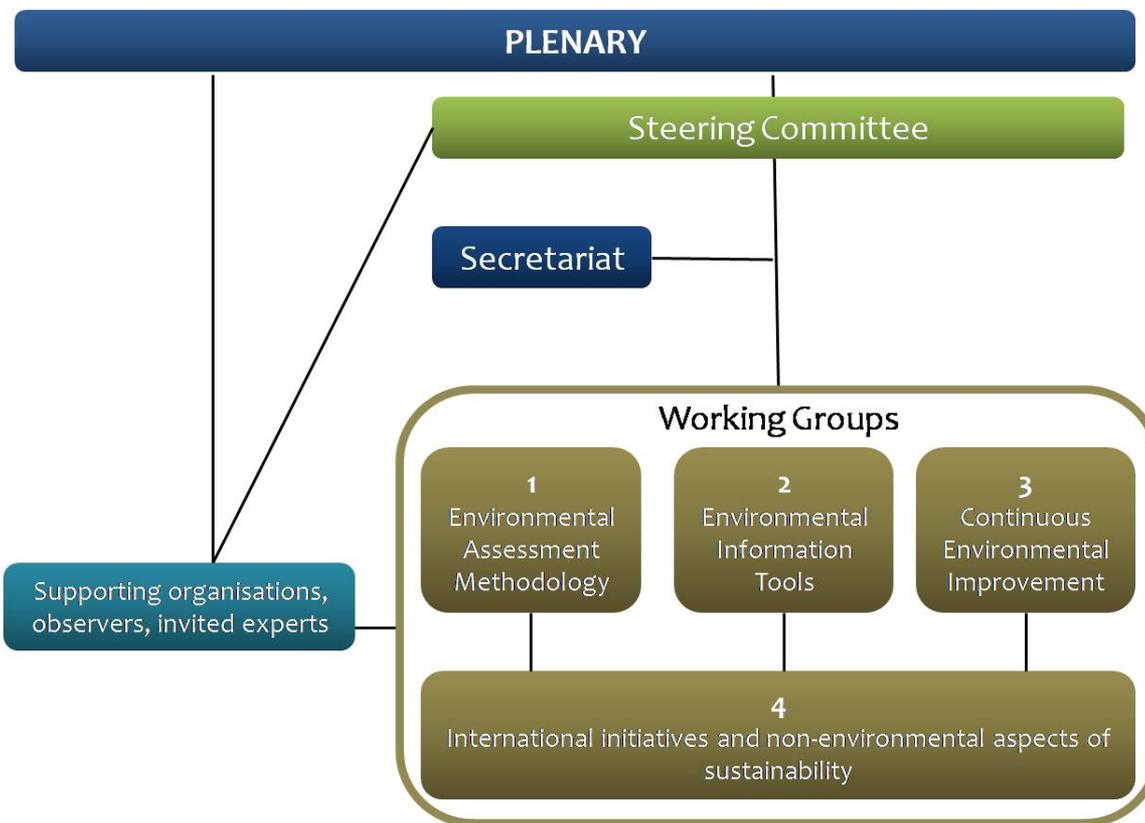
Three Key Objectives:

1. Establish scientifically reliable and uniform **environmental assessment methodologies** for food and drinks
2. Identify suitable **tools and guidance for voluntary environmental communication** to consumers and other stakeholders
3. Promote **continuous environmental improvement** measures along the entire food supply chain;





Governance Structure



All RT bodies are co-chaired by the European Commission and representatives of the RT constituencies





The Lead Principle

Environmental information communicated along the food chain, including to consumers, shall be scientifically reliable and consistent, understandable and not misleading, so as to support informed choice.





The Envifood Protocol

The Envifood Protocol provides a methodological framework for the environmental assessment of food and drink products:

- Gives guidance on how to use LCA methodologies when assessing food and drink products
- Gives guidance on what issues need to be further addressed in PCRs

Main methodological issues covered:

- Functional unit
- System boundaries
- Data quality requirements and dealing with data gaps
- Handling multi-functional processes
- Environmental impact categories





Assessment methodology hierarchy

ISO 14040 and 14044

PEF

European Environmental
Footprint Methodology

Envifood Protocol

Food and Drink Environmental
Assessment Protocol

PCRs

Product Category Rules

**RT Guidance on
voluntary
communication
(Footprint,
certification
schemes, etc.)**





Working Group 2 report:

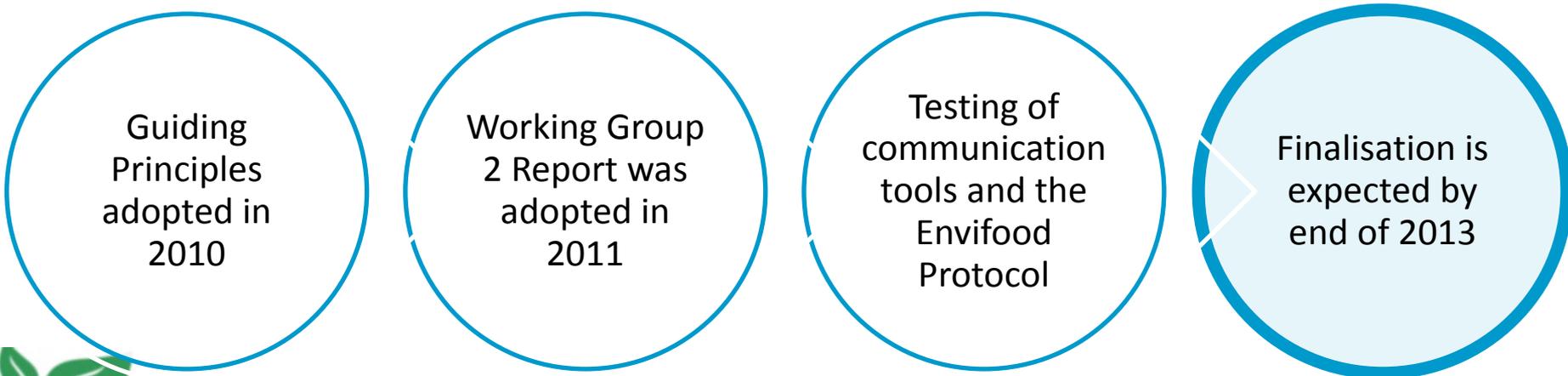
“Communicating environmental performance along the food chain”

- **Public consultation** 15 July - 15 September 2011
- **Report adopted** by Plenary 8 December 2011
- Detailed analysis of:
 - ❑ **Available communication methods and tools** and their strengths and challenges. Both product- (e.g. certification schemes, ISO labels, environmental footprint information) and organisation-related information (e.g. company specific commitments, sustainability partnerships) were evaluated.
 - ❑ **Where and how to communicate**, at the point of sale (e.g. on-pack, on shelf, price-terminal), close to the point of sale (e.g. leaflets and receipts) and finally beyond the point of sale (e.g. public relations, media and marketing campaigns).
- **Next steps:** Voluntary pilot testing of communication tools alongside ENVIFOOD Protocol: early 2013



Working Group 2

Identify suitable **tools and guidance for voluntary environmental communication** to consumers and other stakeholders



Guiding
Principles
adopted in
2010

Working Group
2 Report was
adopted in
2011

Testing of
communication
tools and the
Envifood
Protocol

Finalisation is
expected by
end of 2013



Progress in 2012

- **Adoption of the report on “Environmental Communication” at last plenary**
- **Preparation of the testing of the communication of environmental information (to take place alongside with the testing of the ENVIFOOD Protocol)**
 - Questions on communication to be included in common questionnaire
 - Messages to be included in the call for volunteers
- **Presentations on French experience “Affichage environnemental” with focus on communication at WG meeting in 2012, 3rd July**
- **Outstanding activities:**
 - Identify – and further develop if needed - Best Practice examples regarding the provision of environmental information along the food chain
 - Identify specific research issues on environmental information to further develop the knowledge base in the field of consumer behaviour and business opportunities





“Communicating environmental performance along the food chain” Conclusions

- Information communicated must be **valid and reliable**
- Best achieved using a **multifaceted approach**
- Need for **consumer research** as consumers need to be enabled to make informed choices
- The third party use of environmental information has to be further analysed (**data verification**)
- The food chain partners play an important role in enabling consumers to act on complex product-specific information and to make informed choices, supported by **awareness raising** and a broader **public education strategy**.



The Envifood Protocol - next steps

Public consultation:

- Between **21st November 2012** and **31st March 2013**

Testing:

- **Until 22nd February 2013**: Call for volunteers
- **27th March 2013**: Conference call held on methodology in order to facilitate participation of organisations in the testing
- **Up to 30th September 2013**: Testing of the ENVIFOOD Protocol performed by organisations
- **15 October 2013**: Deadline for participants to submit results
- **Rest of 2013**: Analysis of results and integrating changes in ENVIFOOD Protocol
- **End 2013**: Publication of final version of the Protocol



Summary of participants for each product



- 20 organisations, including food and drink manufacturers, trade associations and research institutes.
- Some organisations have agreed to publicly disclosing their participation, whilst some have not.



Beer products



Beverage carton



Chicken stock cubes



Cat product, baby food product, soluble coffee and Milky Baby Food /Shelf stable Dairy



Lemon Ice The and Chocolate praline



food and drink innovation

Soy and beef products



PET and returnable glass bottles for still and sparkling water



Soy drink and soy yoghurt



Meat, dairy or fisheries product



Non-alcoholic drinks



Bottle of red wine



5 wine products





European Food Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) Round Table

For any further information or to express interest in becoming a formal member of the RT please contact also the RT Secretariat:

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