

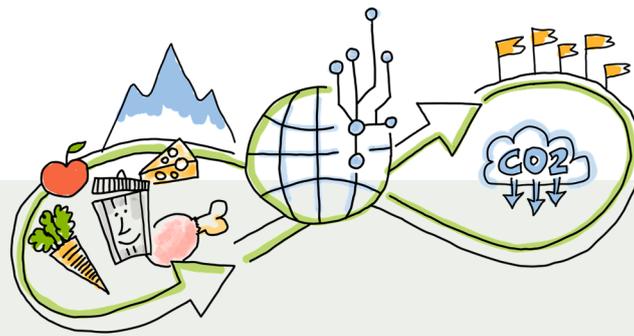
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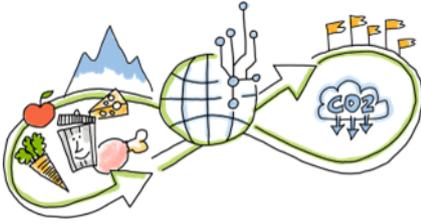
CEFoodCycle

Report on experimentation in each partner region

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- University of Salzburg (AT)
- Salzburg University of Applied Sciences (AT)
- Austrian Institute of Ecology (AT)
- E-Institute, Institute for Comprehensive Development Solutions (SI)
- BSC, Business support organisation, Ltd., Kranj (SI)
- IDM Suedtirol Alto Adige (IT)
- LAMORO Development Agency (IT)
- Nice Côte d'Azur Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FR)
- Agency for Sustainable Mediterranean Cities and Territories (FR)
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Introduction

The CEFoodCycle project aims to test innovative solutions to close local food cycles, thereby reducing food waste and revalorising by-products. Within the framework of Work Package 3, Action 3.1, each partner region carried out a pilot experimentation adapted to its local territorial and economic context.

These initiatives rely on the mobilisation of Circular Food Hubs and co-creation with local stakeholders (businesses, academic institutions, local authorities, NGOs). They reflect the ambition to transition towards a circular and resilient economy in the European **agri-food sector**.

This report provides a comparative overview of regional experimentations, common challenges, shared innovation patterns, and strategic insights gained from the pilots.

A shared methodology guided all pilots, ensuring interregional coherence while allowing local adaptation:

1. Identification of opportunities and stakeholders: workshops, surveys, interviews, and mobilisation of existing networks.
2. Participatory design of closed loops: co-creation of solutions in workshops and working groups.
3. Pilot implementation: collection, transformation, circular logistics, and real-life testing.
4. Documentation and capitalisation: lessons learned, comparative analysis, and dissemination among European partners.

This collaborative approach enabled solutions tailored to local contexts while fostering mutual learning across regions.

Regional experimentations overview

- **IDM (Italy)** – Created a dual closed-loop system by collecting used coffee grounds and transforming them into cosmetic products via co-creation and partnerships.
- **BSC Kranj (Slovenia)** – Upcycled apple pomace and other food waste into sustainable products through flexible regional collaborations.
- **CCI NCA (France)** – The initial plan to pilot a bio-waste collection system with electric cargo bikes in Nice restaurants was halted due to logistical and regulatory issues. The focus has shifted to raising awareness through webinars and micro-learning for local hospitality businesses.
- **E-ZAVOD (Slovenia)** – Used black soldier fly larvae to convert food waste into animal feed and compost, setting a sustainable example of insect bioconversion.
- **FHS (Austria)** – Developed bakery waste reuse and food redistribution strategies in Salzburg with strong social partnerships.

•**HM (Germany)** – Valorized distillation by-products in southern Germany, working with traditional distilleries to identify circular uses and advocate for regulatory reform.

•**LAMORO (Italy)** – Contributed to the establishment of a circular model converting unsellable food into insect-based poultry feed, coordinated through stakeholder workshops.

All pilots followed a similar roadmap:

- Stakeholder Mapping & Outreach: Engaging key actors from business, government, academia, and civil society.
- Needs Analysis: Identifying relevant food waste streams and circular opportunities via interviews, fieldwork, and data.
- Co-Creation & Design: Developing solutions collaboratively—reverse logistics, insect farming, redistribution models, etc.
- Pilot Testing: Deploying solutions in real settings, adapting to feedback and contextual constraints.
- Evaluation & Knowledge Transfer: Capturing lessons, identifying scaling potential, and disseminating insights regionally and transnationally.
- Education and communication were key tools used throughout.

The pilots demonstrate a diversity of approaches adapted to local resources and needs:

- High-value product innovation – Italy, Slovenia
- Sustainable urban logistics – France
- Social redistribution and solidarity networks – Austria
- Industrial reuse and policy advocacy – Germany

Despite these differences, several common patterns emerged:

- Systematic use of participatory and co-creation methods
- Recurring challenges, including variable waste volumes, regulatory barriers, and insufficient economic incentives
- A shared ambition to prove the feasibility, replicability, and scalability of circular food solutions across Europe

Best practices and lesson learnt

Key best practices identified across pilots include:

- Early and continuous engagement of stakeholders.
- Development of context-specific, locally owned solutions (e.g., cargo bikes for urban logistics, redistribution via charity networks).
- Creation of innovative, high-value by-products (e.g., cosmetics, apple leather).
- Policy advocacy to adjust regulatory and fiscal environments to favour circular economy transitions.

Lessons learned from the pilots highlight that effective logistics and infrastructure are essential for circular loops to function efficiently. Business engagement and capacity building are crucial for adoption, while economic viability often depends on added-value creation or access to incentives. Scaling up requires institutional commitment, policy support, and cross-sectoral collaboration at both regional and European levels.

Several innovation patterns emerged across the pilots:

- **Biological Valorization:** E-ZAVOD and LAMORO explored insect farming; HM examined distillation residue re-use—each tapping into low-waste, high-yield biological processes.
- **Integrated Logistics:** Both IDM and CCI NCA showed that rethinking logistics—via reverse flows or green transport—can dramatically improve circularity.
- **Design for Circularity:** Prototyping through co-creation workshops was key, especially in IDM and academic collaborations.
- **Community Partnerships:** FHS and LAMORO illustrated that strong local networks (social orgs, schools, farmers) increase adoption and resilience.

Despite differences, all pilots demonstrated that co-creation, adaptability, and multi-stakeholder (public institutions, private companies, business organizations...) cooperation are keys to success.



Conclusion

These pilot experimentation phases represent a collective achievement across the CEFoodCycle partnership. Through iterative, inclusive, and locally tailored approaches, the pilots have demonstrated that circular food systems are not only feasible but also economically viable, environmentally sound, and socially beneficial. The comparative framework developed throughout this process provides a valuable reference for replication, upscaling, and policy integration within the Alpine Space and beyond.

Looking ahead, the next stage should focus on transforming these local innovations into systemic and scalable solutions. This requires:

- Establishing a common European framework for the improved management of bio-waste across partner countries;
- Consolidating legal and financial enablers to support long-term implementation;
- Strengthening governance structures and partnerships among regional stakeholders;
- Sharing operational toolkits, data, and protocols to enhance interregional cooperation;
- Advancing from pilot initiatives to resilient, circular food systems capable of shaping sustainable regional economies.

The journey from experimentation to transformation has begun. The collective experience of these pilots stands as clear evidence that a resilient and circular future for Europe's agri-food sector is not only within reach, it is already taking shape.



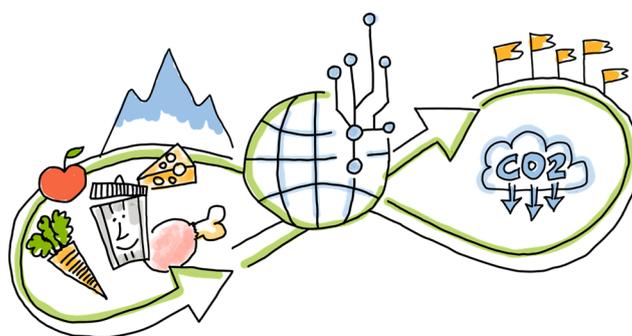
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