

Campaign Brief

ZERO
WASTE
DAY

UN 
environment
programme


UN-HABITAT


ZERO WASTE
FOUNDATION

International Day of Zero Waste
30 March 2026

Zero waste starts on your plate



Reducing food waste is a top solution for the climate and makes economic sense

The world is wasting food on a staggering scale, undermining food security, climate resilience, and compromising progress towards a zero-waste, circular future.

1 billion tonnes

of food were wasted in 2022. Nearly one-fifth of all food available to consumers.

8-10%

of global greenhouse gas emissions are generated by food loss and waste.

Up to 14%

of methane emissions come from food waste alone, largely from rotting organic waste.

US\$ 1 trillion

is the annual cost of food loss and waste to the global economy.

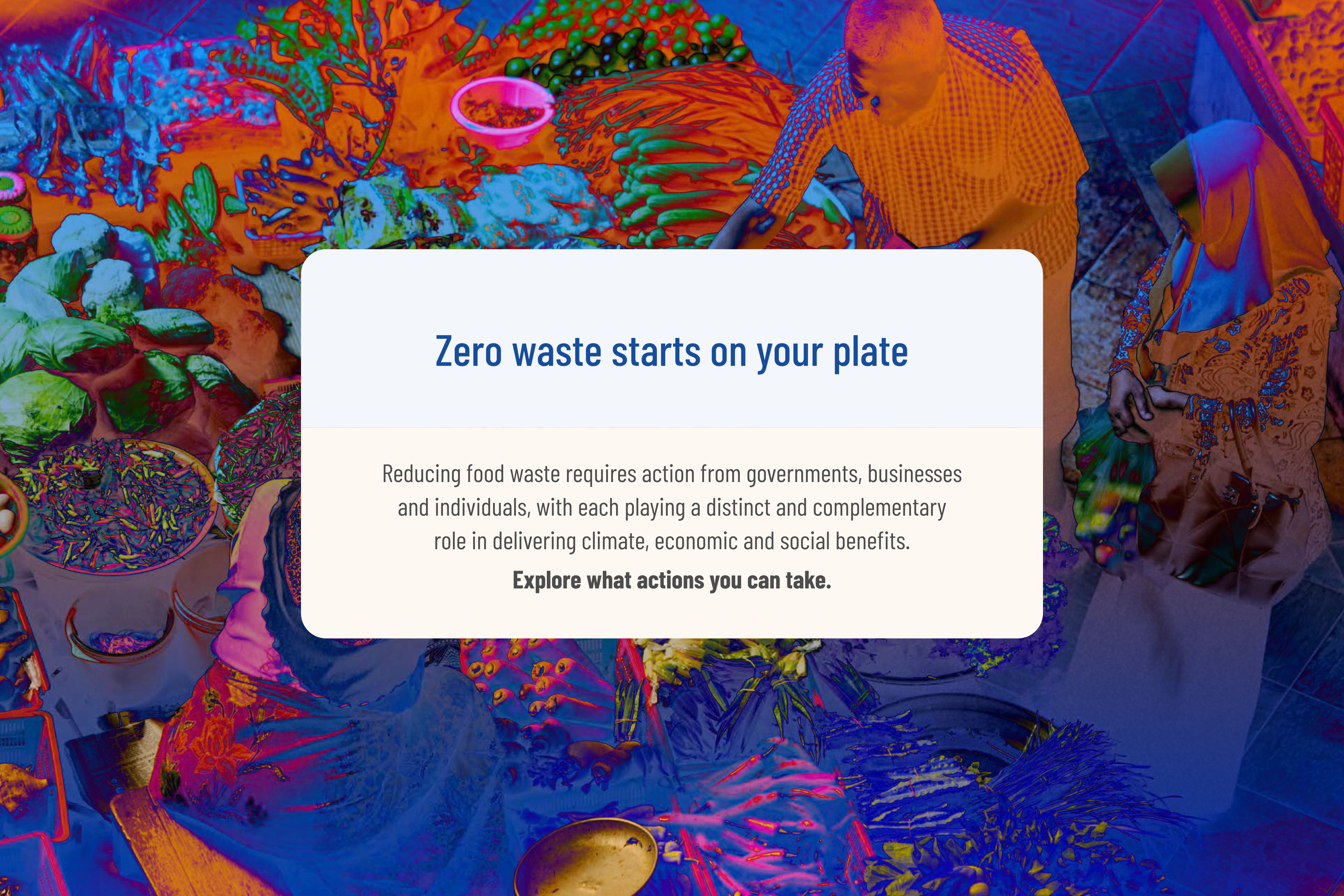
Preventing food waste

saves resources

Preventing food waste saves land, water and energy.

creates jobs

Fostering circular economy approaches creates new job opportunities.



Zero waste starts on your plate

Reducing food waste requires action from governments, businesses and individuals, with each playing a distinct and complementary role in delivering climate, economic and social benefits.

Explore what actions you can take.

Governments can

Advance food waste prevention through climate and biodiversity plans; develop national policies on circularity, waste, food systems, agriculture and urban development; and promote measurement and monitoring.

Reduce methane emissions by keeping food out of landfills, supporting the Food Waste Breakthrough, and meeting the Global Methane Pledge targets.

Promote urban food circularity.

Strengthen public–private partnerships.

Signal leadership and take action by joining the Food Waste Breakthrough.*

Businesses can

Set measurable food waste reduction targets and integrate them into existing sustainability commitments.

Publicly record their food waste levels and resulting GHG emissions.

Innovate in order to transition to circular food systems and improve efficiency across supply chains.

Join the Food Waste Breakthrough to scale solutions and share progress.

Consumers can

Plan, buy, store and prepare food mindfully to cut waste and save resources.

Support food recovery, redistribution and composting initiatives.

Help make food waste socially unacceptable through everyday action.

***At COP30, UNEP launched the Food Waste Breakthrough with the United Kingdom, Japan and Brazil, aiming to halve food waste and cut methane by up to 7% – thus contributing to the delivery of the Global Methane Pledge.**

How to get involved



[Join the Food Waste Breakthrough](#)



National and sub-national governments and food businesses can demonstrate leadership and progress on food waste reduction and climate action.



[Event registration](#)



Organize or promote activities and register your event on the global map.



[Social media assets](#)



Share solutions on social media using #ZeroWasteDay.

Key resources

[The campaign website](#)

[Key messages](#)

[Communication materials](#)

The **International Day of Zero Waste**, established by **United Nations General Assembly resolution 77/161**, is jointly facilitated by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

Observed annually on 30 March, the Day brings governments, businesses, communities and individuals together to promote and embrace circular solutions for a cleaner and more sustainable planet.

Reports of previous observances

2025

2024

2023

**ZERO
WASTE
DAY**

UN
environment
programme


UN-HABITAT


ZERO WASTE
FOUNDATION

Join the global movement for zero waste

#ZeroWasteDay
www.unep.org/zerowasteday

Elisa Vásquez

elisa.vasquez@un.org
Public Information Officer, UNEP

Katerina Bezgachina

ekaterina.bezgachina@un.org
Senior Public Information Officer,
UN-Habitat