

Sustainable Organic Waste Value Chains through Circular Economies

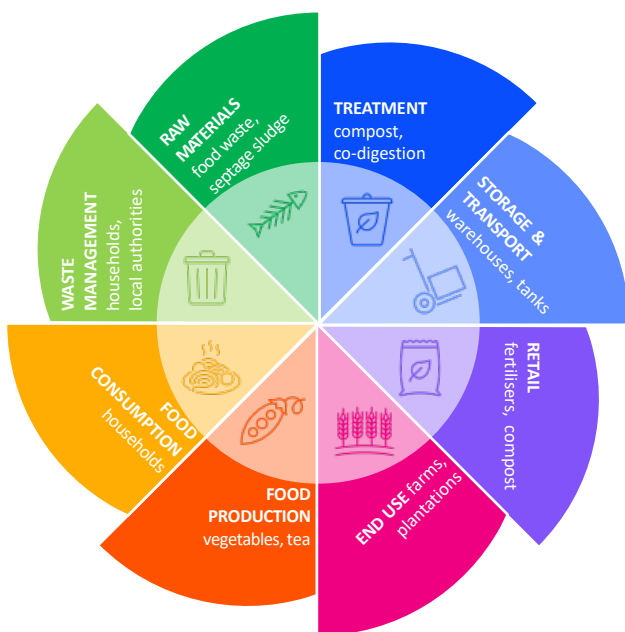
Networking and knowledge forum SUMMARY OF LEARNING

This summary document provides an overview of learning and insights from a multi-stakeholder networking forum held in Colombo Sri Lanka, 17 November 2022. The Forum sought to build links between waste management, agriculture, and government agencies to strengthen circular economies and included 46 representatives relevant to organic waste value chains - from government, civil society, private sector, academia, and development partners.

From your experience, what are **success stories** of organic waste management – for circular economies - that could be expanded in the future?

Forum participants provided numerous success stories highlighting the breadth of work which is happening in Sri Lanka - often unconnected.

- Production of organic compost is done by multiple and different types of organisations - universities, plantations, councils
- Promotion of home composting is carried out by government and civil society sectors
- Production of innovative products such as value-added compost, pellets, liquid and hybrid organic-inorganic fertiliser by universities, government, councils, donors
- In some instances, institutional waste is provided to piggeries
- Encouragement of private-public partnerships by government and donors
- Government sets and assures quality standards and provides rewards



About the Research Partnership

The forum was hosted by a research partnership exploring barriers and opportunities for circular economies in waste-food value chains in Sri Lanka. The partnership is between the Institute for Sustainable Futures at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS-ISF), the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Janathakshan (GTE) Ltd, and Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka (SUSL).

The research is funded under the Knowledge and Linkages for an Inclusive Economy (KLIE) Grants Program of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

See work from the research partnership to date date: [Click here.](#)



What are the **challenges or barriers** your organisation / projects has faced to maximise use of organic waste?

Forum participants provided numerous challenges or barriers relevant to the organic waste value chain our research partnership has been using:

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| WASTE MANAGEMENT- | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of quality control of waste management • Lack of coordination between institutions • Lack of leadership for compost production • Poor coordination and collaboration between private and public sectors |
| RAW MATERIALS- | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste segregation is poor at household level |
| TREATMENT- | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited quantity of compost for commercial agriculture use • Poor nutritional quality of compost • Time consuming /smelly / costly composting processes • Poor technology and infrastructure for composting • Low staff capacity awareness on waste management |
| RETAIL- | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor testing / assurance to quality standards • Lack of innovative products and marketing |
| END USE- | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor demand for compost waste products |

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Partial knowledge and still more to learn

The forum offered an opportunity for a broad range of actors to share and learn together about current practice and future visions for circular economies. Though we recognise we didn't learn about all aspects of the organic waste value chain - for example - storage and transport; food production; food consumption were not discussed.

We also noted that a gap in participation – with no retailers in the room to share insights on marketing organic waste compost products.



What is your vision for 2050 for a transformed organic waste system in Sri Lanka?



What would be a significant change to achieve that vision?

Participants identified different targets of use / re-use of organic waste – from 100% to between 50-70%. *This compares to current use of organic waste for compost in Sri Lanka XX% in WHAT HERE.*

Significant changes to achieve this vision were described:



Awareness and behaviour change at the household level



Promotion of organic farming practices



Value-add compost



Organic waste management system innovation



Policy and institutional coordination

(i) reducing organic waste (ii) promoting home and community-level composting (iii) improving re-use through better segregation of waste (iv) introducing levies or standards for waste and waste segregation (v) school focused behaviour change campaigns and use of media

(i) improving marketing of compost to farmers (ii) strengthening extension services

(i) Improving the nutrient value of compost through added septage or other nutrient sources

(i) promoting improved appropriate technologies at individual and clustered facilities (ii) knowledge sharing and technology transfers

(i) good stable policies implemented (ii) coordination and collaboration between institutions, private sector, and different levels of government (iii) expand facilities including for bio-gas (iv) research and development for evidence-based policy

Invitation for continuing engagement



Our research partnership welcomes continuing multi-stakeholder engagement. To reach us please email: SLoganicwastevaluechains@uts.edu.au

See work from the research partnership to date date: [Click here.](#)

