

# UNCTAD's mandate on Consumer Protection



- ✓ UN body responsible for dealing with economic and sustainable development issues with a focus on trade, finance, investment and technology;
- ✓ 195 members;
- ✓ *Think, Debate, Deliver* - to assist developing countries better participating in the global economy;
- ✓ Focal point for Competition and Consumer Policies within the UN system

The custodian of the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection, the only internationally agreed instrument in the field of consumer protection

- UN General Assembly Resolution 70/186  
of 22 December 2015 -

# UNCTAD's 3 pillars of work

## Consensus Building

- UN Review Conference - every 5 years since 1985
- Intergovernmental Group of Experts (IGE) meetings on Competition (since 1998) and Consumer Protection (since 2016) Law and Policy - annually

## Research and Analysis

- Publication of papers and studies on competition and consumer protection
- Legal assessment
- Research Partnership Platform (since 2010)

## Technical Cooperation

- Demand-driven assistance at national (since the late 90s) and regional (since 2003) levels
- UNCTAD Voluntary Peer Reviews on Consumer Protection Law and Policy

## Consumers' legitimate needs:

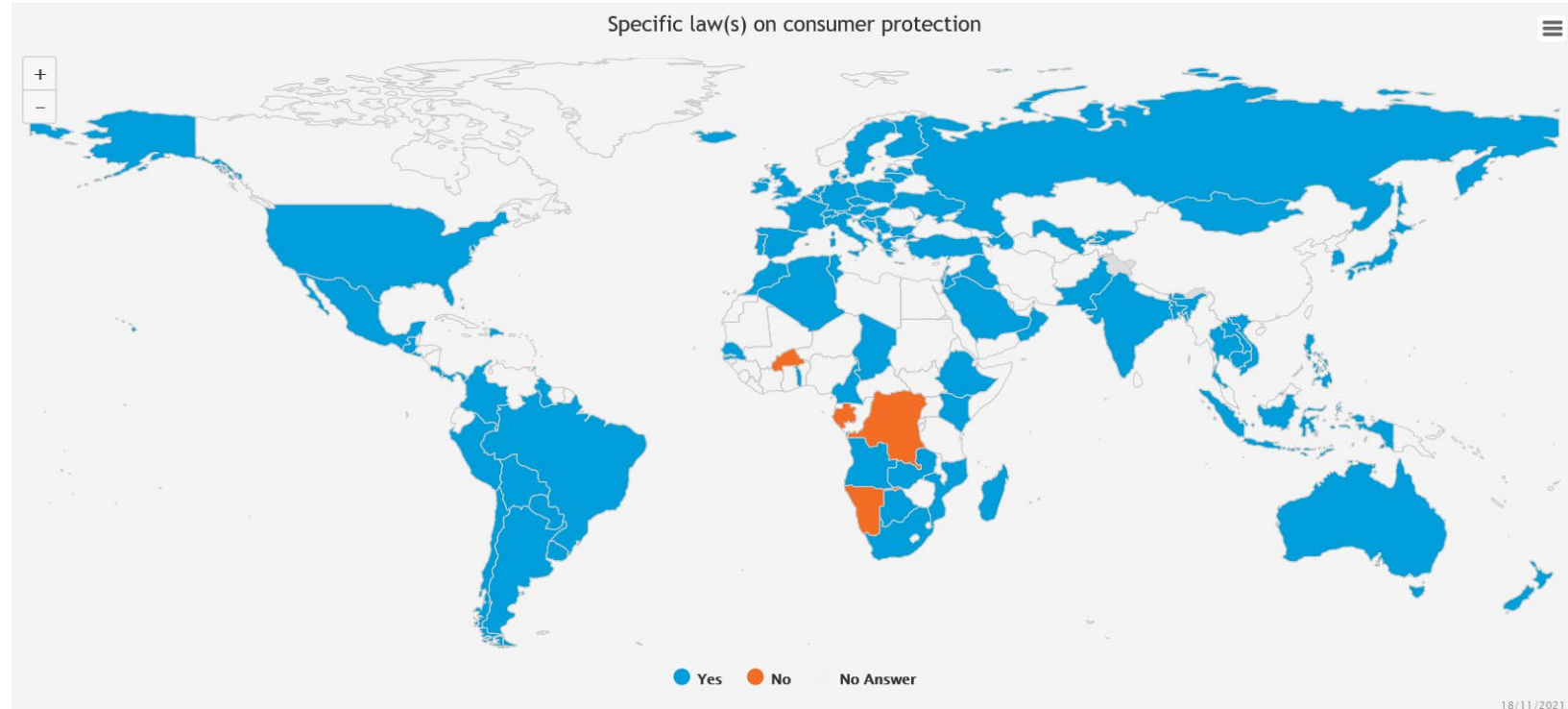
- *Access to essential goods and services;*
- *The protection of vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers;*
- *The protection of consumers from hazards to their health and safety;*
- *The promotion and protection of the economic interests of consumers;*
- *Access by consumers to adequate information to enable them to make informed choices;*
- *Availability of effective consumer dispute resolution and redress;*
- *Consumer education, including education on the environmental, social and economic consequences of consumer choice;*
- *The promotion of sustainable consumption patterns.*



# UNCTAD World Consumer Protection Map ([unctadwcpm.org](http://unctadwcpm.org))



**Currently displaying information from 104 member States and showing the importance of Legal Frameworks and National Policies on Consumer Protection**





Other UNGCP relevant issues include:

### Principles for Good Business Practices

- - Fair and equitable treatment;
- - Commercial behaviour;
- - Disclosure and transparency;
- - Education and awareness-raising;
- - Protection of privacy;
- - Consumer complaints and disputes.

- Standards for the safety and quality of consumer goods and services



33: Member States should formulate or promote the elaboration of standards, at the national and international levels for the safety and quality of goods and services and give them appropriate publicity, and regularly review them.



34: Where a standard lower than the generally accepted international standard is being applied because of local economic conditions, every effort should be made to raise that standard as soon as possible



35: Member States should encourage and ensure the availability of facilities to test and certify the safety, quality and performance of essential consumer goods and services.

**"Sustainable Consumption includes meeting the needs of present and future generations for goods and services in ways that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable"**

# 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



Shared responsibility:  
member States; businesses;  
consumer associations;  
environmental  
organizations. Consumers  
need to be informed;

Policy-making in partnership  
with all relevant  
stakeholders;

Mixed instruments and tools  
are welcomed: regulatory  
mechanisms, standards,  
business initiatives;

Research, methodologies  
and data are necessary to  
support planning and  
monitoring;

Business encouragement  
towards new sound products  
and services as new  
technologies;

Governments and  
international organizations  
should lead examples of  
sustainable practices in  
procurement.



# International Cooperation in the field of Consumer Protection

## REGULAR COOPERATION

Con



with  
International  
institutions

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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF AWARENESS OF  
FOOD LOSS AND WASTE - 29 SEPTEMBER

## YOU PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



### SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STARTS WITH YOU

Governments, businesses, consumers, international organisations have a shared responsibility towards sustainable consumption.

Currently a third of all food produced globally is lost or wasted along the supply chains or by consumers. Thus large tracts of land and around 25% of world's fresh water supply is used to grow food that is never eaten, causing around 8-10% of greenhouse gas emissions. To ensure sustainable food systems and improve food security, both businesses and consumers have a role to play: businesses should follow good practices and standards; consumers can make informed, sustainable and responsible consumption choices.

We all need to reduce food loss and waste. Here are some things you can do:

#### CONSUMERS

- use your right to accurate and complete information about goods
- learn about the impact of your consumption on the environment
- buy only what you need
- freeze surplus fresh produce
- take restaurant leftovers home
- look for recipes to use up foods at home

#### TRADERS AND RETAILERS

- handle products carefully
- ensure ordered volumes are well planned
- improve logistics to shorten transport times
- store and display products at the appropriate temperature
- avoid campaigns encouraging consumers to buy more than they can eat
- find ways to use, donate or sell damaged or suboptimal products on time
- measure food loss and waste
- roll out FeedUP@UN



### CONSUMERS AND TRADERS CAN BE DRIVERS OF CHANGE AND DECISIVELY CONTRIBUTE TO AVOID AND REDUCE FOOD LOSS AND FOOD WASTE



For more information:  
The [United Nations Guidelines to Consumer Protection](#) comprise the main characteristics of effective consumer protection legislation, policies, and enforcement institutions.

[UNECE Code of Good Practices: Reducing Food Loss in Handling Fruits and Vegetables](#)

[FeedUP@UN](#) - a digital blockchain-powered solution designed by UNECE for identifying, quantifying, and tracing the food that disappears along supply chains

# Ongoing UNCTAD-UNECE Cooperation on Consumer Protection and Circular Economy



#### FOOD LOSS AND WASTE

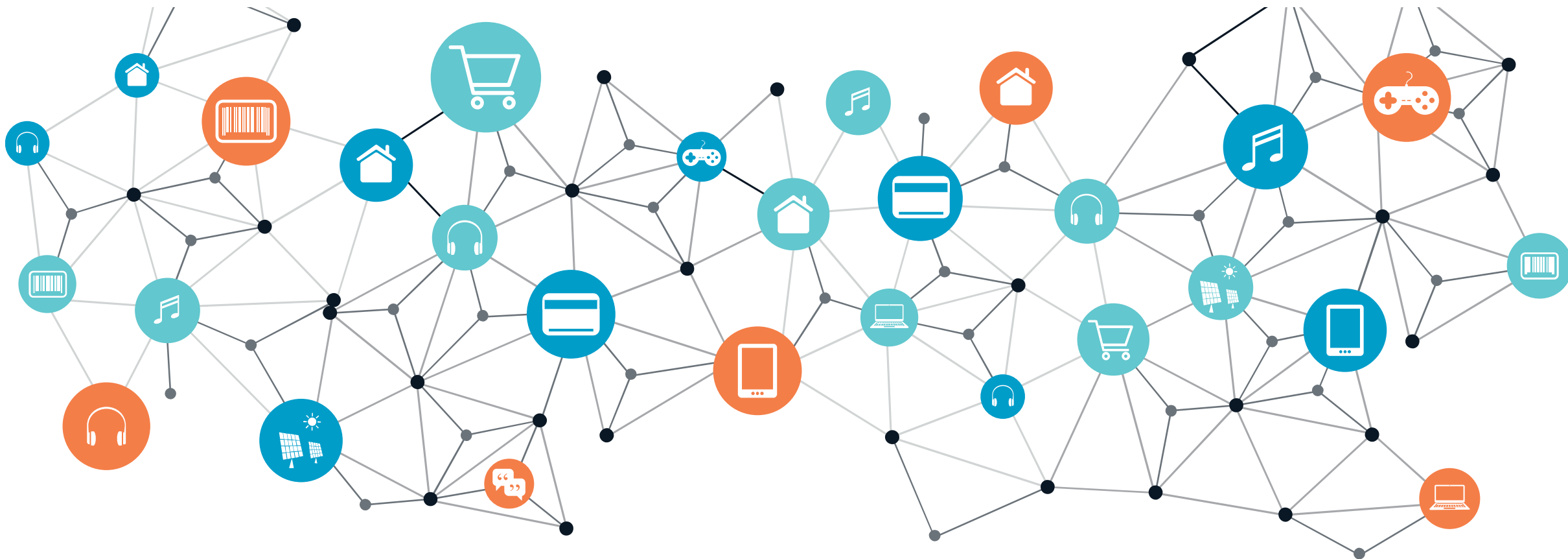
## Consumers and traders can be drivers of change and contribute to avoid and reduce food loss and waste





# Final remarks

- **Trust and a safe environment are crucial for consumers as well as for businesses to flourish**
- **Information, education and guidance for consumers and traders is fundamental for an enabling environment.**
- **International cooperation between governments and international organizations and networks is essential to address common challenges and find global solutions.**
- **Strong business engagement (standards and self-regulation initiatives) is instrumental for improved consumer protection.**
- **Civil society organizations (consumer associations, for instance) need also to be fully associated to contribute to awareness-raising, education and outreach.**



# THANK YOU!

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<https://unctad.org/Topic/Competition-and-Consumer-Protection>

