



LIVEWELL PLATE EVALUATION REPORT

PURPOSE

We've prepared this document to help members of the Network of European Food Stakeholders understand the evaluation process of our report *A balance of healthy and sustainable food choices for France, Spain, and Sweden* – along with the LiveWell Plates.

The report was presented at our first project workshop – 'Appetite for change' – in September 2012, after which members of the network were invited to contribute and share their views on our findings.

This evaluation report details our responses to comments and queries collected from stakeholders during the consultation period. We look at key results, alterations and outcomes and set out recommendations and next steps for the LiveWell for LIFE project.

The purpose of this report is to ensure that the results of *A balance of healthy and sustainable food choices for France, Spain, and Sweden* – along with the specific inputs from stakeholders – can play a key role in framing the next stages of the project. This in turn will allow us to use the LiveWell Plate as a tool to drive the sustainable diet debate forward.

LIVEWELL FOR LIFE – PROJECT BOUNDARIES

LiveWell for LIFE is a three year, EC funded project which unites environment and health agendas. The aim of the project is to influence key stakeholders from across the food supply chain, and EU and national policy makers, in order to reduce the environmental impacts of the European food sector. The project is a continuation of Livewell UK, which was designed to incorporate issues of environmental sustainability (in particular a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions) into the Eatwell plate – a visual communications tool created by the UK Food Standards Agency to promote nutritionally healthy diets.

The project's purpose is to inform European policy. To do this we'll use the LiveWell Plates as a tool to develop robust EU public policy recommendations and approaches for adopting a more sustainable diet. Finally, we'll disseminate the LiveWell Plate, the policy options and implementation approaches – or pathways – in the pilot countries and across the EU.

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LiveWell for LIFE is not a behaviour change campaign and it's beyond its scope to communicate the LiveWell Plates to consumers. Naturally we hope the Plates will be used to inform consumer choices, but we can only prepare for this in our final communications reports.

While we recognise there are multiple potential environmental benefits of sustainable diets, LiveWell for LIFE is delivering on the climate change objective of the LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance component. Therefore, LiveWell for LIFE addresses carbon emissions only, with a focus on ensuring the implementation of EU commitments under the UNFCCC Kyoto Protocol. Although there are many other important environmental indicators – such as land use, energy and water – it's beyond the scope of this project to include these.

We believe the LiveWell diet is a good *first step* towards a more sustainable diet. With its focus on mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, the LiveWell diet is more specifically a low-carbon diet. However, LiveWell for LIFE is not a single issue project: it incorporates health, socio-cultural, economic and qualitative elements as well. Consequently, we believe the LiveWell diet fits within the Food and Agriculture Organization's description of a sustainable diet: 'one that is good for humans and the eco-sphere both in the present and the long term'.

For further details about how to be involved and the scope of the project, please read the *Network of European Food Stakeholders specifications*.

THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The LiveWell for LIFE research report *A balance of healthy and sustainable food choices for France, Spain and Sweden* outlined the methodology used to develop the LiveWell Plates for France, Spain and Sweden. The draft version of this report together with an accompanying summary document and case studies were shared with the Network of European Food Stakeholders at the workshop in September 2012 after which we proactively encouraged feedback through a three-week consultation process.

The consultation period consisted of feedback collected on an online community platform – the LiveWell for LIFE [Ning](#) – and written responses sent by email. All the draft documentation was available to download from the online platform.

The following six questions were asked as part of the consultation process:

1. *What works about the LiveWell Plate and recommendations?*
2. *What do you feel doesn't work about the LiveWell Plate and recommendations?*
3. *What else would you like to see incorporated or altered about the Plate and recommendations?*

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4. *How easy do you think it will be for consumers to follow the guidance?*
5. *How viable is the LiveWell tool for EU wide use?*
6. *What role do you think EU and national governments should play relating to sustainable diets?*

Stakeholder workshop

The consultation process kicked off at the first stakeholder workshop 'An Appetite for Change' held in Brussels on 18 September 2012. The workshop, facilitated by an experienced team, gave participants the opportunity to learn about the research methodology and provide feedback on the research findings. Over 60 people – representing different sectors in the food supply chain – participated in the workshop and all feedback was captured and recorded.

Online forum

In addition to the workshop, stakeholders were invited to feed into the consultation process by using the online communication platform, [Ning](#). This feedback mechanism wasn't well used: only a few responses were submitted on it. On reflection, stakeholders may not have felt comfortable commenting publicly on the reports, preferring to submit individual responses via email.

Written responses

We received 18 written responses. Not all touched on the six consultation questions: comments also related to the project's scope or specific aspects of the LiveWell Plate that were of particular interest.

In total, 60 stakeholders participated in the consultation process, representing a broad range of sectors across the food supply chain.

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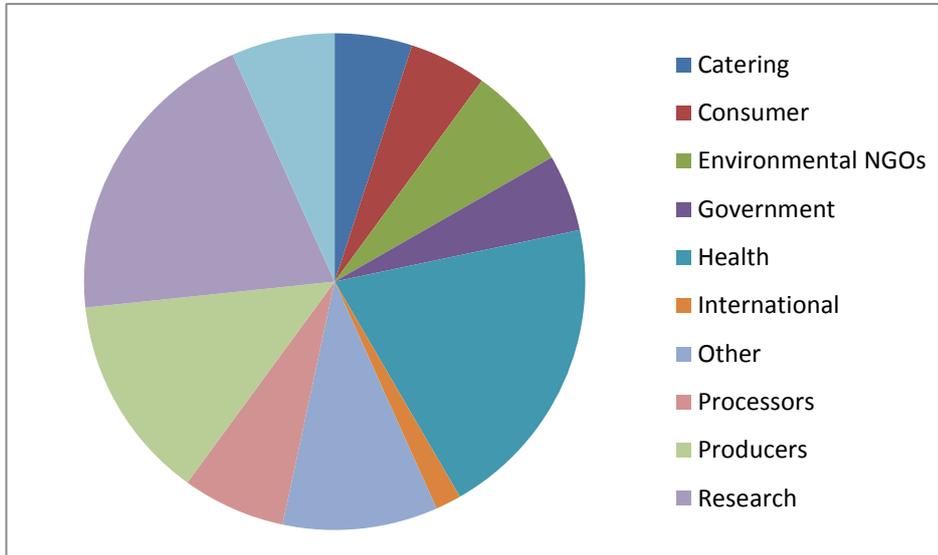


Figure 1:
Consultation responses by sector

THE SUITABILITY OF THE LIVEWELL PLATE

The LiveWell Plate is a pictorial way to outline the types and proportions of food an average adult needs for a low-carbon diet that’s nutritionally viable.

We assessed the suitability of the LiveWell Plates using key sustainability and nutritional criteria:

- sources of protein
- demonstrable climate benefits
- nutritional balance

We also evaluated the extent to which cultural factors are considered in the methodology and reflected in the country-specific diets.

EVALUATION RESPONSES

The workshop and the consultation responses highlighted a number of common themes. We’ve grouped these into three main areas of concern: the research methodology, using the LiveWell Plates as a communication tool, and the LiveWell principles.

Research methodology

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The questions raised about the research methodology covered several issues around the project's scope and the reasons for this. Answers to a lot of the questions raised are covered in the two reports – *Food patterns and dietary recommendations in Sweden, Spain and France*, and *A balance of healthy and sustainable food choices for France, Spain, and Sweden*. In these, we either explain why we're doing something or why we're not. In response to the queries we've created a *LiveWell for LIFE frequently asked questions* document that covers the following:

- What about other environmental impacts?
- How are the diets sustainable if they only consider greenhouse gas emissions?
- Why only a 25% reduction? It's possible to achieve more.
- What about seasonality? Local? Organic? Why as part of this project aren't you promoting these forms of production? Especially as many WWF offices and some stakeholders advocate these.
- Why so few drinks?
- Why aren't you saying 'eat less dairy'?
- What about more precise food categories?

In the *LiveWell for LIFE frequently asked questions* document, we haven't covered barriers to behaviour change, the role of choice editing and sharing of information on loyalty cards, or the role of other food and health stakeholders (including the health and fitness sectors, private health care and insurance). One or two stakeholders raised these issues, which will be part of our future work – either in our report on the social and economic opportunities and barriers to a sustainable diet, due to be published in 2013, or in our report on the pathways to a sustainable diet.

LiveWell Plates as a communication tool

In general, feedback about the actual Plates was very positive. It was suggested that as well as putting the information in the form of plates we should follow the countries' national formats.

Though it's outside the scope of this project, there's an appetite for an increased variety of plates – be it for vegetarians or vegans or on religious grounds. This is something we'd happily support others to do. We were also asked to look at type of households and income levels, something which we'll touch on later in the project. We've already looked at the cost of the Plates to the consumers and at external reports that show the Plates don't cost more, and in many cases will be below the average household expenditure for all but the lowest and highest income groups.

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The area that had most feedback was the menus and shopping lists. **These were never meant to be the main focus of the work.** The main part of the work comprises the conclusions from and science behind the first two reports – *Food patterns and dietary recommendations in Sweden, Spain and France* and *A balance of healthy and sustainable food choices for France, Spain, and Sweden*.

The purpose of the menus and shopping lists was to demonstrate the variability of the Plates and how easily people could create a week's menu that includes traditional dishes. **We emphasised that these were just sample menus.** In-country food and nutrition experts helped us to create the menus. Many people commented that the menus and shopping lists didn't represent what they ate, and that they didn't like the menus, or that they were old-fashioned. We understand the concerns and recognise that we'd never be able to produce menus and shopping lists that everyone would agree with. We don't have the resources to create a variety of shopping lists for different cultures, regions and income groups.

We stand by the menus as a tool for demonstrating flexibility, yet we've decided to remove them from the document. We might – with communications colleagues and other stakeholders – revisit the menus and shopping lists and work together to create a country-specific portfolio.

LiveWell principles

Following feedback, it's clear that not all the stakeholders feel completely comfortable with the 'five simple rules for a sustainable diet' presented at the workshop. But, after considerable work and consultation we've decided that the five principles will remain. They're based on evidence from the two initial reports and from further evidence outside this project: current consumption patterns clearly show what people need to eat less of and more of. We're aware that some stakeholders, especially in the pilot countries, will disagree with some principles. But we can assure them that the five principles are evidence-based.

The LiveWell principles are:

1. Eat more plants
2. Waste less food
3. Eat less meat
4. Eat less processed food
5. Eat certified food

It was suggested that we add some more principles such as: eat less, eat less sugar and salt, eat more local and seasonal produce, eat organic, have a meat-free day, etc. But we decided that five simple messages are enough.

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We've deliberately kept them simple to make them easier to adopt. The principles are meant to be top-line and to be used in Brussels. Going forward, we'll also use these principles as the basis for our discussions around social and economic opportunities and barriers.

We'll decide – in consultation with the pilot country offices – which principles they can support. If stakeholders in a pilot country reject a principle, the pilot country offices won't have to include it in their communications, as long as they can demonstrate the reason for this. But they can't change the other principles; the principles are meant to be universal and relevant to European-wide food consumption.

Furthermore, we invite the pilot countries' offices to add evidence or value-based levels to the principles. And we might, with stakeholders, develop a set of secondary guidelines to complement the principles.

ADJUSTMENTS AND LIMITATIONS

We've made the following adjustments as a direct result of stakeholder feedback submitted during the LiveWell Plate consultation period:

1. The researchers were asked to clarify specific points from stakeholders in order to answer questions raised (summarised above).
2. We've altered the project summary report to help make the main findings of the initial project research clearer. Please note that the research report *A balance of healthy and sustainable food choices for France, Spain, and Sweden* has not been altered. The document still details the initial research findings, while this evaluation report provides details of what further work needs to be done.
3. We've removed the menus and shopping lists.
4. We've produced a project scoping document to clarify the boundaries of the LiveWell for LIFE project.
5. We've produced a *LiveWell for LIFE frequently asked questions* document to support common questions and queries received through the stakeholder consultation.
6. We've undertaken additional research on Swedish consumption to analyse the latest Riksmaten 2010-11 survey data (released October 2012) so that the Swedish Plate can be compared against more current consumption.

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7. We've applied to the European Commission to request a change of expenditure in order to further support the development of more communicable and culturally appropriate tools (such as recipes, menus and shopping lists) with a discrete group of stakeholders from each country.
8. We've committed to revisit the LiveWell principles, to ensure they're relevant for Europe-wide use. And we'll accept if a country chooses to not include a principle, if reasons for this can be demonstrated.
9. We may develop a set of further guidelines to complement and expand on the principles.
10. We've developed a series of LiveWell Plate pages on the main project website to help communicate the LiveWell Plates and the implications for the next steps of the project.
11. We've redesigned the nutritional groups of food for the Spanish proposal, according to the national nutritional recommendations.

During the initial research we recognised the limitations of the model developed to produce the LiveWell Plates. There were a number of areas that we couldn't examine, which would have had an effect on greenhouse gas emissions. These included seasonality; greenhouse gas production from specific foods as opposed to broad food groups; the effect on greenhouse gas emissions of the varying national nutrient guidelines across Europe and the bioavailability of these nutrients in the body; greenhouse gas emissions from energy spent on cooking and processing foods in the home; and alcohol consumption. More specific details of these can be found on page 21 of *A balance of healthy and sustainable food choices for France, Spain, and Sweden*.

LESSONS LEARNED DURING THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- A relatively large number of stakeholders participated in the stakeholder workshop and submitted consultation responses that demonstrated a high level of interest and knowledge on sustainable diets, which was extremely useful.
- Stakeholders preferred to submit consultation responses by email rather than post comments online.
- Few stakeholders read the full research report. Instead they focused on the executive summary.
- We published the draft reports on the membership-only community platform. This encouraged more online registrations, but it may have been a barrier to some.

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NEXT STEPS

We're grateful for the large number of contributions we received from stakeholders into the evaluation process. The production of the LiveWell Plates and the discussions had by stakeholders will help us frame the development of the next stages of the project. These are:

- To develop public policy options to help facilitate adoption of sustainable diets across the EU.
- To find practical pathways for implementing the LiveWell Plate and sustainable diets in pilot countries and across the EU.
- To disseminate the LiveWell Plates, policy options and implementation pathways in the pilot countries and across the EU.

In addition, based on feedback from stakeholders, we've identified the need for further work on:

- tools
- principles
- further ways to disseminate and appropriately communicate the Plate and findings
- peer research

The Plates and the resulting evaluation will support the next stage of the project which will identify key social and economic challenges and opportunities for the adoption of sustainable diets across the EU.

This will take place through stakeholder interviews (October-December 2012); the second LiveWell for LIFE workshop – 'Adopting healthy sustainable diets: key opportunities and barriers' – and an online debate (March 2013); and the resulting report (April 2013).

We look forward to a range of stakeholders participating in this part of the project.

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