

## **1.05 billion tons of food wasted, says UNEP**

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) working in close association with the British NGO Wrap has found some alarming trends based on how food waste is handled globally. Approximately 785 million people face chronic starvation while households form the biggest group of food disposers (631 million tonnes). The retail and catering industries wasted another 300 and 130 million tonnes respectively. Together, all three groups wasted 20% of the food available globally, along with emitting 10% of global greenhouse gases (\$1.01 trillion in costs). Also, 153 million children less than five years of age suffer from linear growth failure due to little or no nutrients present in their diets.

Every individual in India wastes 56 kg per capita (on average) annually while the world throws away 80 kg per capita as food waste. Uttarakhand leaves away the highest waste total to 147 kg/per capita among Indian states followed by Karnataka (89 kg/per capita), Andhra Pradesh (58 kg/capita), Jharkhand (50 kg/capita), and Kerala (45 kg/capita). The differences in food scraps generated by the rich, middle-income, and impoverished remained at 7-8 kg/capita. Nations with hotter climates suffer the most as they lack adequate cold storage facilities or supply chains that help them carry food safely.

Rural areas of middle-income nations managed their food waste effectively by diverting it into fodder and as compost for organic farms. Bhutan is an example of this. They managed to reduce food scraps by 20 kg/capita annually, while others like Pakistan and Maldives generated 215 kg/capita and 208 kg/capita yearly. Meanwhile, Japan and the UK have considerably reduced the wastage of food, by 20% and 30% approximately. The report concluded by emphasizing public-private partnerships by finding contributors/sponsors that can effectively aid in restructuring the supply of food. One such example is Kenya, which not only fritters away 5 million tonnes of food per year but also has social enterprises that now help in collecting excess food items from supermarkets, groceries, or packaging centers and then share them with pupils and exposed communities.